



5cc  
11,185

X

sec  
11, 185

t



THE  
PRIMACY  
OF THE  
APOSTOLIC SEE,  
AND THE  
AUTHORITY OF GENERAL COUNCILS,  
VINDICATED.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS  
ADDRESSED TO THE  
RIGHT REV. J. H. HOPKINS, D.D.  
BISHOP OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF VERMONT.

BY THE  
RIGHT REV. FRANCIS PATRICK KENRICK, D.D.  
BISHOP OF ARATH, AND COADJUTOR OF THE BISHOP OF PHILADELPHIA.

"Omnia te video dixisse contra Catholicam : imo multa pro  
Catholica, cum Catholicus non sis."—*Optatus*, l. 1, § 5, p. 4.

PHILADELPHIA:  
JAMES KAY, JUN. & BROTHER, 122 CHESTNUT STREET.  
PITTSBURGH: JOHN I. KAY & CO.  
BALTIMORE: F. LUCAS, JUN.

1838.

Entered according to the act of congress, in the year 1837, by FRANCIS PATRICK  
KENRICK, in the office of the clerk of the district court of the United States in and  
for the eastern district of Pennsylvania.

TO THE  
MOST REV. SAMUEL ECCLESTON,  
ARCHBISHOP OF BALTIMORE.

MOST REVEREND SIR:

YOUR eminent station, and still more your zeal for our holy Religion, encourage me to inscribe to you the following Letters, directed to vindicate the Primacy of the Apostolic See. The influence of your example must be powerful with those who reflect that you sacrificed early prejudice to truth, and that whilst you yield to none in love of country, and attachment to its free institutions, you cherish profound veneration for the high authority which Christ established for the government of his Church. With such a Prelate at the head of the American Hierarchy, who recommends Religion by the exercise of the mild virtues which it inspires, we may hope that many of those who lie scattered throughout this vast and flourishing Republic, like sheep without a shepherd, will

soon be brought to the fold of Jesus Christ. This is, doubtless, your highest ambition, and most earnest prayer, as it is likewise the object dearest to the heart of him who, with veneration and esteem, subscribes himself,

Your devoted brother in Christ,

† FRANCIS PATRICK KENRICK,  
*Bishop of Arath and Coadj. Philadelphia.*

Philadelphia, December 8, 1837.

## PREFACE.

THE following Letters have been written in reply to the work which has recently appeared from the pen of the Protestant Episcopal bishop of Vermont, in which “the Church of Rome, at the present day, is compared with the Church of Rome in her primitive purity,” and which is “addressed to the Roman Hierarchy.” The investigation which has been thus opened is highly interesting, and the mode in which it is conducted sufficiently novel to increase the interest. Though the early writers of the Anglican Church made free use of the Fathers, it was found by experience so difficult to suit their testimony to the doctrines of the day, that appeals to their authority have become comparatively rare in Protestant polemics. Bishop Hopkins has ventured anew on ground whence many a champion of Protestantism had been forced to retreat, and has advanced close to our camp, brandishing weapons taken from our own armory. Not confining himself, as some more cautious disputants, to the earliest Fathers, styled Apostolic, he has extended his researches to the middle of the fifth century, and presented, in regular array, a host of writers, with apparent confidence in the favourable character of their testimony. Catholics owe him a debt of gratitude for directing public attention to these venerable witnesses of ancient faith; and Protestants must feel flattered that so

plausible a defence of their principles could have been made by their ingenious advocate. To inspire confidence in his proofs, Bishop Hopkins cited at the bottom of the page, in many instances, the original Greek and Latin, and in some cases the received Latin version of some Greek Fathers. I regret to be obliged to dispute the fidelity of the English translation of several passages; and though I willingly acquit him of intentional misrepresentation of the meaning of the text, the learned reader will admit, that it has been, in many places, greatly mistaken. The frequency of my corrections, which I have generally made in the notes, may appear unkind, perhaps pedantic; but the errors sometimes materially affected the sense, and were made the occasion or ground of false argumentation. It is pleasing to find that a desultory mode of controversy has not been pursued by Bishop Hopkins, his arguments being directed almost exclusively against one tenet of Catholic faith—the Supremacy of the Pope. It is, indeed, to be regretted that the Bishop did not confine himself to that tenet, which would have fixed attention so completely on it that the reader might have more easily formed his judgment. The occasional objections introduced against General Councils have called for a reply, but have not afforded an opportunity of a full development of the nature and authority of these venerable assemblies. The Letters, then, may be deemed the vindication of the Primacy alone, though incidentally the authority of General Councils is likewise vindicated. The main subject has been somewhat encumbered, in the work of Bishop Hopkins, by the introduction of supposititious works, and of passages having little or no connexion with it: which render the task of the writer and reader more tedious than it

would otherwise have been. By the repetition of assertions of the same kind in numberless places, the respondent has been led to repeat, with some variety of phrase, what a different arrangement would not have required. The plan, however, of the original work is somewhat new and pleasing, and well calculated for its end, uniting much art with apparent simplicity. The style is that of a gentleman and a scholar—and abounds in professions of kindness—in exhortation—in appeals—and in prayer—but withal it conceals the bitterness of reproach and accusation. In the answer, great care has been taken to repress the strong feeling which groundless imputations awaken—to temper its expression—and to sustain truth without violating charity. It has been deemed unnecessary to swell the book by giving all the passages in the original Greek, or Latin, or in the Latin version of the Greek text, as most readers cannot profit by the facility which it affords of judging of the accuracy of the English version : but wherever a doubt might be excited as to the meaning of the words, or a correction was to be sustained, or the words seemed peculiarly important, they have been given in the notes. These Letters, written purely with a view to vindicate a divine dogma, appear without any pretensions to adventitious ornament; and are submitted in the hope that they may fall into the hands of some who are not as yet of the fold of Jesus Christ, but whom his mercy designs to bring, that they may be of the one fold, under the one Pastor.

# CONTENTS.

## LETTER I.

Promotion of Christian union. The Catholic principle. Canon law. Fathers—Extent of their authority. Use and meaning of ANATHEMA. Apostolic Fathers. Apostolic Canons. Apostolic Constitutions. Council of Florence. Pontifical rights and privileges.

## LETTER II.

Scriptural proofs of the Primacy. Promise of Christ. Metaphor of the Rock—Of the keys of the kingdom. Distinction between Petrus and Petra abandoned. Greek text. Syriac version. Arabic, Chaldaic. Bloomfield, Bishop Marsh, Rosenmüller. In what sense is Peter the foundation? Supposed literary blunder. Vigilius. Charge of Christ to Peter. Prayer that his faith may not fail. Pastoral commission. Arnobius. Protestant interpretation. Exercise of the Primacy. Election of Matthias. Chrysostom. Council of Jerusalem. Decree of Peter. Jerome, Theodoret. Cave. Perpetuity of the Primacy. Peter, Bishop of Rome.

## LETTER III.

Objections. Christ the Rock, the foundation. St Leo. Bishop Marsh. Bloomfield. Humility inculcated. Domination. Vanity. Power of forgiveness. Peter and John sent. Peter vindicates himself. Paul's visit. Reproof of Cephas. Order of the Apostles. Foundation of the Church of Rome. St Francis de Sales. Scriptural allusions.

## LETTER IV.

Spurious Documents. Canons of the Apostles. Apostolic Constitutions. Decretals of Isidore. Sources. Letter of Hormisdas. John of Constantinople.

## LETTER V.

Apostolic Fathers. Ignatius. Roman Church presiding. Clement of Rome. Letter to the Corinthians. Irenæus. Splendid testimony. More powerful principality. Agreement with the Roman Church. Paschal question. Victor. Threat of excommunication. Ancient usages. Perpetuity of the Roman See. Undying sovereignty. Fanciful hypothesis. Primitive views. Seat of empire.

## LETTER VI.

Tertullian. Peter the Rock. Bishop of bishops. Church of Peter Apostolic. Keys left through Peter to the Church. Ingenious interpretation. Council of Jerusalem. Faber's acknowledgment. Succession to Peter. Montanism. Key of knowledge. Apostolic Churches. Vindication of Tertullian.

## LETTER VII.

Clement of Alexandria. Hypotyposes lost. Fragment in Eusebius. Precedency of Peter. Ancient Church. Unity of the Church. Figurative terms. Gospel of Mark.

## LETTER VIII.

Origen. Keys of Scripture. Mystical interpretation. Privileges of all the Apostles. Moral application. Gates of hell powerless against the Rock and Church. Heterodox. Connexion not immediate. Claims of the episcopacy. Capricious exercise of power. On Peter the Church is built. To him supreme power is given. Visit to Rome. Profession of faith.

## LETTER IX.

St Cyprian. One Church. One Chair. Communion with Cornelius, that is, with the Catholic Church. Authority of the Roman Church. Place of Peter. Pagan emperor jealous of the Roman Bishop. Acknowledgment of Bishop Hopkins. Human church. Liberty of bishops. Schismatics. Letter to Cornelius. One Bishop. One Judge. Preventive of heresy and schism. Peter speaks for all. Majesty of the Church. Roman faith inaccessible to perfidy. Appeals to Rome. Right not questioned. Root and parent of the Catholic Church. Power to depose bishops. Unity of the Episcopate and Church. Peter its Guardian. Letter to Quintus. Doubt raised as to the genuine character of the writings on baptism. Incorrect translations. St Gregory the Great. Mutual appellations. Greatness of Rome.

## LETTER X.

Controversy concerning baptism. Narrative of St Vincent of Lerins. Zeal of the Apostolic See. No innovation. Cyprian not mentioned. Plea for him by St Augustin. Eusebius. St Jerome. Firmilian. Admission of the superiority of Stephen. Cause of excited feeling. Abuse of authority. Political illustration. Supposed submission of Cyprian. Victor and Stephen sustained by councils. Example of Cyprian

## LETTER XI.

Lactantius. Catholic Church. Eusebius. Circumstantial evidence. Paul preceded all the Christian apologists. Silence of Mark. Peter the first—the most powerful and the greatest of the Apostles. Fanciful interpretation of this testimony. The primacy of a skilful lawyer. Chair

of Peter. Roman Bishop successor of Peter. Paschal controversy. Reimonstrance of Irenæus. Letter of Dionysius of Alexandria. Council of Antioch. Ancient discipline. Reference by Aurelian to the bishops of Italy and Rome. Letter of Constantine. Judgment of Melchiades. Council of Arles. New trial unnecessary. History of Eusebius. Offensive language of Bishop Hopkins.

## LETTER XII.

General Councils. Pontiff's right of convocation. Of presiding. Distinction between doctrine and discipline. Council of Nice summoned by Constantine, with the assent of Sylvester. Address of Constantine. Untimely introduction of the Council of Jerusalem. Imperial convocation not suited to the divided state of Christendom. Letter of the oriental bishops to Damasus. Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. Osius of Cordova. Order of Councils. Council of Constantinople. Unjust reproach by Bishop Hopkins. St Cyril presiding by commission of Celestine. Second Council of Constantinople. Assertion of Bishop Hopkins refuted. Council of Chalcedon. Presidency of the emperor. Western Councils. Right of confirmation.

## LETTER XIII.

Nicene Canons. Sixth Canon. Metropolitical rights. Patriarchates. Primacy. Proceedings at Chalcedon. Exceptionable authority of Quesnel. Modification of ancient legislation.

## LETTER XIV.

St Athanasius. Mode of defending Councils. Authority of the Nicene Council. False Councils of Arians. Nicene definition unchangeable. Imaginary contrast. Real harmony of doctrine. Testimony of Bishop Bull. Of Saywell. Regard for the Holy See. Efforts of the Eusebians. Synod summoned by Julius. Athanasius acquitted. Judgment of Julius. Historical facts. Eusebians acknowledge the pre-eminence of the Roman Church. Literary criticism of Bishop Hopkins. Judicial forms. Reversal of sentence. Letter of Julius. Splendid evidence of the Primacy. Council of Sardica. Testimony to the Primacy. Titles. Bishop of the Catholic Church. Liberius. Pseudo-Athanasius. Letter of Pope Agatho. Acknowledgment of Whitaker.

## LETTER XV.

St Cyril of Jerusalem. False translation. Peter the most eminent. The Prince of the Apostles. Power of the keys. Overthrow of Simon Magus. Primacy of jurisdiction. Irrelevant texts. Translator of Cyril. Catholic Church. Shameful insinuation.

## LETTER XVI.

St Hilary of Poictiers. The Church built on Simon Peter. Power of the keys. Faith of Peter. Arian heresy. Literary criticism. Apostrophe to Peter. Epithets. Polity of the Church. Sense of Scripture. Strong foundation. Bishop Pearson.

## LETTER XVII.

St Basil the Great. Peter the foundation. Prayer for the Patriarch. Diptychs. Order of the Church. Peter preferred. Received the keys. Letters to Athanasius. Implores the authority of the Roman Bishop. Signal fact. Eustathius restored by Liberius. Roman Church mother of all churches. Baptism administered by heretics. Nicene Council.

## LETTER XVIII.

St Gregory of Nazianzum. Peter called a rock, and entrusted with the foundations of the Church. False translation and false reading. Mistake of Bishop Hopkins. Virtues of the elder Gregory. Bishop of the Catholic Church. Hackneyed objection. Unity of faith. Councils.

## LETTER XIX.

St Ambrose. Where Peter is, there is the Church. Faith of Peter. He is called a rock, and made the strength of the Church. Received a kingdom from Christ. Moral application. Peter Bishop of the Roman Church. Powers common to the Apostles. Peculiar prerogative of Peter. Unity of action in the three Divine Persons. Unfair use of isolated expressions. Equality of merit in Peter and Paul. Peter the foundation. Pastoral commission. Vicar of Christ. Pious usage. Council of Aquileia. Record of trial. Splendid testimony. Council of Capua. Satyrus.

## LETTER XX.

St Jerome. Letter to Damasus. Chair of Peter. Communion with Damasus. Letter to Evagrius. Equality of the Episcopal character. Peter the foundation. Abuse of the power of the keys. Confession. City of Rome. Local usages. Jerome's motives and sentiments. Exhortation to Demetrias. Roman faith. Adoption of Jerome's sentiments.

## LETTER XXI.

St Augustin. Hesitancy as to the rock. Bishops Pearson and Beveridge. Principality of the Apostleship. Allegorical interpretation. Primacy of Peter. Excellence of Peter. First among the Apostles. In him unity is commended. Catholicity of the Church. Roman Church. Apostolic Chair. Letter to Hesychius. Misrepresentation of its meaning. Roman usages. Doctrinal tribunal. Acknowledgment of Casaubon. African Councils. Authority of the Holy See.

## LETTER XXII.

St Chrysostom. Peter Prince of the Apostles. Charge given to him and his successors. Power of binding and loosing. Commission to feed the sheep. Peter the head of the Apostles. On him the Church is built. Divinity of Christ proved by his gifts and promises to Peter. Peter placed over the world. Doctor of the whole world. Rock of faith. Appeal of Chrysostom to Innocent.

## LETTER XXIII.

St Isidore of Pelusium. Confession of Peter. Church not to be overthrown. St Prosper of Aquitaine. Authority of the Apostolic See. Condemnation of the Pelagians. Extraordinary assertion of Bishop Hopkins. Vincent of Lerins. Pope Stephen. Rome head of the world. Rule for Scriptural interpretation. Catholics follow it. Bishop Pearson and Archbishop Potter. Primacy ~~ALWAYS, EVERY WHERE, BY ALL~~ admitted.

## LETTER XXIV.

General testimonies. St James of Nisibis. St Epiphanius. St Gregory of Nyssa. St Asterius of Amasea. St Optatus of Mela. St Cyril of Alexandria. St Peter Chrysologus. Council of Ephesus. Of Chalcedon.

## LETTER XXV.

Interpolation of the Fathers. Jansenist Quesnel. Unjust charge. Retort. Vigilius of Thapsis. St Maximus of Turin.

## LETTER XXVI.

Claims of the primitive Roman Church. Admission of Hallam. Sicius, Innocent, Zosimus, Leo. Council of Sardica.

## LETTER XXVII.

Temporal power. Profession of faith. Sir Edward Sandys. Gregory VII. Condition and compact. American independence. Deposition by Innocent IV. Public opinion. Benefits of Papal power. Foreign Quarterly and London Quarterly Reviews. Southey. Third canon of Latran. Council of Trent. Council of Florence. French declaration. Opinions. Disclaimers of temporal claims. German empire. False construction. Offensive assertion. General character of Pontifical authority.

## LETTER XXVIII.

Mode of election. Ancient form. Modifications. Coronation of the Pope. Electors. Mistakes of Bishop Hopkins.

## LETTER XXIX.

Catholic Church. Ancient respect for Papal authority. Questions answered. St Cyprian on Unity. Jerome. Optatus. Obedience to Pope. Creed of Pope Pius. Ancient rites. Anathema. Council of Constantinople. Choice of words. Unjust accusations. Infallibility. *Failing and falling*. Prayer of Christ. St Leo. Plan of reunion. Influence of government. Groundless assertions. Ascendancy. Spiritual triumph. Friendly discussion. Exhortation.

## INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

### ON CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

YOUR recent work, "addressed to the Roman Hierarchy" and dedicated "to the cause of Catholic unity," has been read by me with no small degree of interest and attention. As one of the body addressed, which you are pleased to designate "numerous, powerful, and august," I could not be insensible to your very solemn appeal on a subject involving our eternal interests, and those of the millions over whom we watch, being to render an account for their immortal souls: as a friend to Catholic unity, I hail every overture for reconciliation coming from the highly respectable and influential body to which you belong. In the perusal of your work, I have been afforded great gratification, no less by the method which you have adopted, and which, if constantly followed, must lead to the end we both have in view, than by the treasure of testimonies which it contains, regarding the rights of the apostolic see, which cannot be too highly valued. Some inaccuracies, however, have escaped you, which I feel warranted in pointing out, although perfectly aware of the delicacy of the task, and of the responsibility incurred by anticipating my more experienced and more competent colleagues. I rely, however, on your indulgence, and on theirs, and only plead sincere zeal for the cause of Catholic unity.

You commence by stating that the principle on which you proceed is our own principle; and, by way of explanation, you add, that you should make your appeal in every case to the

authorities sanctioned by our own canon law. The use of such documents as have the sanction of the Church is certainly allowable, provided, however, they receive only that degree of authority which she ascribes to them : but as the body of canon law—especially that part styled the decree of Gratian—has received no solemn sanction, no weight can be given to passages extracted from it, beyond what the document to which it refers may possess intrinsically, or derive from the usage of the Church.\*

According to Gibert, whom you quote, and to whose position I willingly assent, the holy scriptures are the fountain of law, both as to faith and morals, when expounded by competent authority, not by private interpretation, in accordance with that faith which was originally delivered to the saints. From it, he adds, we learn the necessity, utility and form of councils ; the model of which is found in the council of Jerusalem, whose proceedings are recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. General councils are placed by him next ; and passing over the Pontifical decrees, which form a great portion of the canon law, he gives us a list of Fathers mentioned with approbation in a decree of a Roman synod, held towards the close of the fifth century. St Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and martyr, is the first on this list ; and it is said, in the original decree, that his works are to be received in all things :† yet as among his reputed works are some‡ in defence of what is now acknowledged by all to be an error,—the invalidity of baptism administered by heretics,—we must suppose that these were rejected as supposititious, or that this general phrase admits a certain latitude of signification. Although St Augustin was an ardent admirer of the great bishop of Carthage, he

\* See *Devoti institut. Juris Can. I. I*, § 79.

† “In omnibus recipienda.” *Conc. Rom.* § iv. tom. 11. *Conc. Hard. Col.* 939.

‡ Some learned men in Germany, and elsewhere, strongly contend that these are not genuine. See Binterin’s excellent work on the discipline of the Church in the early, middle, and late ages.

avowed his perfect freedom as to such opinions as were not in harmony with Scripture,\* and expressly rejected those ascribed to him against the validity of such baptism; “I do not admit, I say, the opinion of blessed Cyprian concerning the baptizing of heretics and schismatics, because the Church does not admit it, for which blessed Cyprian shed his blood.”† As you, Right Reverend Sir, desire to proceed on our principles, I beg of you to notice, that the general approbation of the works of any individual father does not imply a solemn sanction of every thing that may be contained in his writings. The Church regards the Fathers as witnesses of ancient faith and tradition, wherever they unanimously declare or vindicate some doctrine; but, as the enlightened bishop of Hippo remarked, in regard to the writings of Cyprian, she does not consider their works as canonical and divine.‡ Though their testimony be worthy of credit, and their individual sentiments should be treated with respect, on account of their learning, piety, and their connexion with the primitive church, yet Catholic principles necessarily free us from the yoke of individual authority, and subject our intellect to Christ alone, speaking by the tribunals which *He* has established in his Church.

In the list which you give, as taken from Gibert, and found in the canon law, you represent as “accursed, whoever does not embrace the letter of the blessed Leo to Flavian, the bishop of Constantinople, even to a tittle.” Instead of the awe-inspiring word “accursed,” I could wish that you had retained the simple “anathema” of the original, and left your readers to learn its meaning from some one who might give it the less odious, but more correct, interpretation, of “separation from the Church of Christ.” Baron de Starek, a professed Lutheran minister, though almost a Catholic in sentiment—perhaps in the end entirely Catholic, in his profound essay on the reunion of the

\* S. Aug. l. II. contra Cresconium, c. 32. “Quod autem non congruit cum pace ejus respuo.”

† Ibid.

‡ S. Aug. l. II. contra Cresconium, c. 32, also Epist. III.

Christian Churches, gives the obnoxious word this milder signification.\* For the present, I will state why so great a penalty as exclusion from the Church of Christ was decreed against such as would not receive unreservedly this Epistle of Pope Leo, whilst no such sanction is given to the rest of his admirable writings, or to those of the other Fathers whose names are mentioned. That epistle was a solemn exposition of the faith of the Church on the adorable mystery of the Incarnation, which was then assailed by Eutyches, who denied the distinction of the two natures of God and man in our Redeemer Jesus Christ. It was read publicly in the great Council of Chalcedon, and the assembled prelates of the Catholic world hailed it as the voice of Peter speaking by the mouth of Leo. Anathemas resounded throughout that venerable assembly against all who did not hold the faith of the Fathers, so correctly and solemnly declared by the successor of Peter. Before quitting this subject, it may be well to remind you that this “anathema” is borrowed from St Paul: “Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel beside that which we have preached to you, LET HIM BE ANATHEMA. As I said before, so I say now again, If any one preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema.”†

Besides the works of the Fathers specified in the list which you give, you use others, mentioned with commendation by St Jerom, to whose discrimination and judgment great deference is deservedly manifested, without any prejudice, however, to our liberty of respectful dissent, wherever it is not corroborated by the positive sanction of the Church. With regard to the works of minor character which you use, such as Picard, Gibert, Tuberville’s Catechism, Butler’s “Book of the Church,” I can have no objection that you should use them

\* “L’anathème n’emporte point un jugement de damnation.” P. 415.

“Cette sentence ne designe pas une excommunication réunie aux malédicitions.” P. 421. Entretiens Philosophiques traduits de l’allemand, 2d ed. Paris, 1821.

† Gal. i. 8, 9.

for the elucidation of any point in dispute; although they do not possess such weight of authority as could make their testimony conclusive. In an investigation of this kind, the highest authorities only should have been selected.

When noticing the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, I regret that you have introduced the "Apostolic Canons," and "the Apostolical Constitutions," for, as all the learned agree that these latter collections are not the genuine works of the Apostles, reference to them is calculated unnecessarily to inumber and embarrass the controversy. Truth, as it was anciently delivered and professed, being your object, you should have, at once, set aside all documents of a questionable character, and still more those which are known to be supposititious. The same consideration should have determined you to leave unnoticed all such works as, in passing through the ordeal of criticism, have not stood the application of its legitimate tests; such are some works falsely ascribed to the Fathers, and the decretals attributed by Isidore to the Popes of the first three centuries. This would have preserved you from the temptation of expressing yourself in a manner that might be thought offensive, and, consequently, inconsistent as well with the very kind professions with which your letters abound, as with the attainment of that end you have so much at heart. It would have left the sincerity of your search after truth beyond the reach even of suspicion; whilst the introduction of these literary forgeries may be thought designed to convey the false impression that they were contrived by the advocates of the primacy to supply the want of better evidence. This course would have afforded the reader greater facility in judging of the real merits of the case, by concentrating his attention on documents of unquestionable authenticity, whose weight may now be diminished, in his mind, from the connexion with false and forged testimonies, which you likewise bring forward. For this I cannot give you praise.

Instead of stating our belief on the primacy of the Apostolic See in your words, or in those of Tuberville, I beg to submit

the definition of the General Council of Florence : “ We define that the holy Apostolic See and Roman Pontiff has the primacy throughout the entire world, and that the said Roman Pontiff is the successor of blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, and the true Vicar of Christ, and the head of the entire Church, and the father and teacher of all Christians ; and that to him, in the person of blessed Peter, full power was given by our Lord Jesus Christ, to feed, rule and govern the Universal Church ; as is even contained in the acts of Æcumenical Councils, and in the Sacred Canons.”\* With this strong expression of the power and authority of the Apostolic See before us, we can easily dispense with the explanations of Tuberville’s Catechism, and with the passages which you quote as extracts from the Canon law. You seem to have borrowed them from Gibert, to whose works you refer ; but as these are not now within my reach, I cannot ascertain the sources whence he has derived them. I shall observe, however, that the pompous phrases in which the Pontifical authority may be occasionally expressed, are not the fair criterion of its character, which must be ascertained by the solemn and deliberate definition of the Church, such as that of the Fathers of Florence. To adduce one instance, you quote a passage which you thus translate :—“ The Roman Pontiff bears the authority not of a mere man, but of the true God upon the earth.”† Some one might imagine that the Pope was here held up as the true God ; whilst the obvious meaning of the text is, that he acts as vicegerent not of a mere man, but of the true God,—our Lord and Redeemer Jesus Christ. The various privileges or rights ascribed to him should not be confounded with the primacy itself, since, as you yourself afterwards state, a diversity of opinion exists among Catholics themselves as to the extent of his prerogative, though the

\* Conc. Flor. Collat. 22, p. 985. T. ix. Edit. Paris, 1714. Conc. Col. Hard.

† “ Romanus Pontifex non puri hominis ; sed veri Dei vicem gerit in terris.” Gibert, tom. 2. p. 9.

divine institution of the primacy is admitted by all. Those who seriously desire unity, should carefully distinguish between the defined doctrines of faith, in which all harmonize, and those opinions which are tolerated by the Church. If we could agree on the doctrine, we might, at our leisure, in the bosom of the Church herself, consider the weight of authority which may sustain each sentiment, and adopt or reject it as our enlightened judgment would dictate. I recollect a very interesting essay for Catholic communion written by a minister of the church of England, in which was stated, with great candour and accuracy, what Catholic faith essentially demanded, and how far Anglican divines had advanced on each disputed point. The difference between us appeared very small, when the concessions made by your divines were placed at the side of the Catholic tenet. With a similar view the great Bossuet composed his simple but profound exposition of the doctrine of the Catholic church on matters of controversy. In the same spirit I beg to state, that it is my design to maintain the doctrine and faith of the Catholic church on the primacy, without entering into the vindication of any disputable claim: and if the authorities which I shall have occasion to bring forward, or the expressions which I may use, should go beyond these limits, I shall not be supposed to urge any thing questionable, as a condition for Catholic communion. The primacy which I mean to defend is the Spiritual Presidency of the Church of God,\* established by Jesus Christ, for the maintenance of faith in its integrity, for the good order and government of the church in things spiritual, and for all that appertains to eternal salvation. Could I indulge the hope of inducing you, Right Reverend Sir, to recognise this Catholic dogma, as one plainly delivered in the Scriptures, acknowledged by all the Fathers of the Church, solemnly admitted and declared

\* I borrow the phrase from St Chrysostom, who says that Christ gave to Peter "the presidency of the Church in the whole world;"—"per totum orbem terrarum ecclesiæ præsidentiam tradidit." Ad pop. Antioch. hom. 80 de pœnit.

by the General Councils of the bishops of the Christian world, I should undertake my present task with alacrity and joy. But deep and strong as is my own conviction and faith on this subject, I know, like Augustine, how difficult it is to rid oneself of false opinions imbibed in infancy—and which too frequently grow with our growth and strengthen with our strength.\* Still I enter on the work as a duty which I owe to truth—to the Apostolic See—to the Church of Jesus Christ. May his Spirit guide my pen, and prepare our hearts for the influence of his grace.

\* Aug. l. 2, de civ. Dei. c. 1. Tom. III. l. 7, p. 31.

## LETTER II.

### SCRIPTURAL PROOFS OF THE PRIMACY.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

YOUR fourth chapter commences the important investigation of the claims of the Church of Rome, to what you, somewhat ambiguously, call "universal dominion," but which would more correctly be termed, her claim to authority in defining the doctrines of faith, and in maintaining religious unity. You quote the celebrated passage of St Matthew, in which Catholics believe Christ promised this authority to Peter, who died bishop of Rome. The occasion on which the words were spoken must be remembered, in order to perceive their full force. Christ had asked the Apostles what opinions were entertained of him, and had been told by them that some said he was John the Baptist, others Elias, some Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He then asked, who they themselves believed him to be. Peter stood forward and said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."\* He alone speaks, and to him alone the Redeemer addresses his reply. "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shalt be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." Peter's confession of faith is declared to be divinely inspired, and on account of it he is pronounced blessed. His name is

\* Matt. xvi. 16.

changed; the son of Iona is henceforth to be called Cephas, a Syriac word,\* which in Greek is rendered Petros, in English, a rock.† As Jacob was called Israel, because in the mysterious conflict he prevailed over the angel of God;—as Abram was called Abraham, because chosen to be the father of a countless multitude;—so Simon is called Cephas or Peter, because made by divine grace a rock of faith. Nor is the firmness of his faith a mere personal endowment; he is to become the foundation-stone of the Church of Christ. That Church is the house the wise man built upon a rock. Christ Jesus is the architect: Peter is placed by Him as the foundation: the building is to be raised by the power of the divine Founder, and, owing to the immovable nature of the foundation, is to be so solid, so compact in its parts, that waves and winds may dash against it, but cannot overthrow it. Time cannot crumble it into dust; no engine of human power can raze it; hell itself is powerless against it. Peter is to it what a strong foundation is to a vast building,—its strength, its necessary and permanent support. Take away the foundation, and the building tumbles to the ground. He is, then, not merely the first to profess aloud the divinity of his master, nor merely the first to preach the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles, but he is the rock on which the Church rests, and with which it is inseparably united.

To this striking and expressive figure, Christ adds another, still more clearly designating the governing and supreme power which he determined to impart to Peter. The keys of the palace, or of the gates of the royal city, were the known emblems of power and authority.‡ Christ promises to give him

\* *Kipha*, the Greeks write Κηφας.

† In three Arabic versions he is styled *the rock*: the definite article being prefixed: thou art the rock. See Ecchellensis, par. 2. p. 195.

‡ Isaiah xxii. 22. “I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulder; and he shall open, and none shall shut: and he shall shut, and none shall open.” This is said of Eliacim, who was to be substituted to Sobna in the high priesthood. Of Christ the same prophet foretells: “the government is upon his shoulder,” Is. ix. 6; making an allusion to the manner of carrying the keys.

the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which, in the New Testament, means either the Church of God on earth, or the celestial kingdom itself. To Peter, then, was promised the governing power in the Church,—the power of opening heaven itself to man. His relation to the Church is to be one of power and authority. Whatsoever he shall loose upon earth, either by unfolding the difficulties of the law, as that phrase sometimes was understood among the Jews, or by remitting the offences of the penitent, as the collation of the power of forgiveness manifests, shall be also loosed in heaven: whatsoever he shall bind on earth, by his authoritative definition and decree, shall be also bound in heaven. This surely conveys the idea of the highest degree of power which Christ could communicate for our instruction, government, and salvation. The promise is made to him distinctly, and that on account of his glorious confession, and the privileges and power which it indicates are consequently to belong to him. Christ afterwards, indeed, promised to all the apostles the power of binding and loosing: still what was promised in common to all, must be acknowledged peculiarly and pre-eminently to have been promised to Peter,—else why was it that he received in particular what in common with his fellow Apostles he would equally have got? Surely it was not without the special view of marking his high authority and essential relation to the Church, that he alone was declared its fundamental rock—its ruler, bearing the keys of this heavenly kingdom.\*

I am surprised to find you, Right Reverend Sir, endeavouring to weaken what appears to me the obvious meaning of the words “upon this rock,” by referring to the different words, almost similar in sound and signification, by which Peter and the rock are expressed in the Greek text. Still more am I astonished at

“ ‘As to the expression ‘the keys,’ it may also refer to the power and authority for the said work; especially as a key was anciently an usual symbol of authority, and presenting with a key was a common form of investing with authority, insomuch that it was afterwards worn as a badge of office.’” Bloomfield, a learned Protestant commentator, on this text.

your objection to profit by the aid which the language spoken by our Lord affords for the elucidation of this passage. Its meaning is, indeed, equally clear in the Greek, and in our own language; but as the genius of the Greek induced a slight variety in the terms, and as the English does not at all present the force of the allusion, it is reasonable and necessary to examine what were the precise expressions used by our Lord. To sustain your objection, you bring forward the authority of the Vulgate, which, although we are forbidden to reject, we are not prohibited from illustrating, by reference to the original text, where it exists, or to the peculiar genius of the original languages, to remove any ambiguity or obscurity that may be in some term of that version. You ask us, "do we mean that the original Gospel, which is in the Greek, is not our only sure authority?" We fully admit the authority of the Greek text; but this admission does not in the least degree interfere with our right to clear up any difficulty by reference to the language in which many believe that Gospel to have been written, or in which, at least, our Redeemer spoke. These are not, as you suggest, "imaginary words which our Lord might have used," but they are the words which he really used. One of them is known from the Gospel of St John to have been Cephas, and the other is ascertained by examining whether there is the variety of gender and termination in the Syriac term as is found in the Greek. The Syriac term admits no such variation. The very ancient Syriac version proves the correctness of this remark, and modern learned Protestants are so far from contesting it, that, according to the testimony of one of them, almost every modern expositor of note has abandoned the distinction between Peter and the rock as untenable.\* The French translation fully exhibits the force of the allusion as it was made by our Saviour; because in French, as in Syriac, the same term which signifies *a rock*, is also an appellative noun. Were we to give a strictly literal translation of the sentence into English, we would either say, "thou art a ROCK, and on this ROCK

\* Bloomfield in locum.

I will build my Church;\* or, thou art PETER, and upon this PETER I will build my Church; but, then, either the name given to Simon is suppressed, or the strength and power which it indicates do not appear to be properties of his name as well as of his office. The same may be said of the German, whilst the Latin, Italian, and Spanish, as you remark, follow the Greek, and retain, with the variation of gender, something of the original allusion.† I am, then, perfectly unable to conceive how you could speak of this reference to the original terms as “the fanciful notion of what our Saviour might have said in Hebrew;” and speak of the Greek “as the actual record of what he did say;” especially as afterwards, in your remarks on a text of St John, you adopt the principle which in this instance you reject. Christ certainly spoke not in Greek, but in the language then generally spoken in Judea, whether you please to designate it Hebrew, Syriac, or, more correctly, Syro-Chal-

\* The Syriac version of the New Testament is deservedly of high repute, on account of its early date, and of the near affinity between the Syriac language and the Syro-Chaldaic, which our Lord used, and in which, according to the most probable opinion, St. Matthew wrote his Gospel. In this version, the words “Peter” and “Rock” are expressed by the same characters:

Anath CHIPHA, vehall hada CHIPHA.

In the Arabian version, which, from its connexion with the language in which Christ spoke, is well calculated to elucidate the present subject, we read

Anath ALSACHRA, wahal hada ALSACHRA.

Another Arabic version translates Peter and rock by a different word from that used in the above quotation, but in both instances the same word *alsapha*, is put for Peter and the rock.

A most ancient Chaldee manuscript of St Matthew's gospel, in the collection formerly belonging to Cardinal Barberini, written in characters long obsolete, and professing to have been made in Mesopotamia in the year 330, uses but one word to express Peter and the Rock, *sciuhā*. See the learned treatise of Echelensis, a Maronite de origine nominis Papæ, &c. Romæ, MDCLX.

† Latin. *Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram, &c.*

Italian. *Tu sei Pietro, e sopra questa pietra, &c.*

Spanish. *Tu eres Pedro, y sobre esta piedra, &c.*

German. *Du bist Petrus und auf diesen Felsen.*

daic. He certainly called Simon, Cephas, for we are assured of it by St John,\* and he manifestly referred to him when he said : “ thou art Cephas (a rock), and on this Cephas (rock) I will build my Church.”

The reason why the Greek interpreter of St Matthew used two distinct terms, was, because although the feminine noun properly expressed the force of the original term, yet the Greeks never applied a feminine noun to a man except in derision.† He chose, then, a masculine noun, less expressive, but more appropriate. No ambiguity could have arisen from this circumstance, had not the ingenuity of controversial writers sought to wrest from us this splendid proof of the prerogatives of Peter. Every rule of correct interpretation has been recklessly trampled under foot in the attempt ; and although the preceding words were manifestly directed to Peter, and those which followed were also acknowledged to regard him, still he was denied to be the rock on which the Church was built, as declared in the intervening words which were necessarily applied to him. Happily for the cause of truth, Cameron,‡ Bishop Marsh, and many respectable modern interpreters, have rejected this subterfuge, so unworthy of literary men, and better calculated to show the weakness of those who recur to it, than to invalidate or obscure the strong argument supplied us by the text, in the only interpretation it can consistently have. The most recent editor of the Greek text in England, acknowledges that “ almost every modern expositor of note refers it to Peter himself;” “ and with reason ; for certainly,” as is observed by Bishop Marsh,§ “ it would be a desperate undertaking to prove that Christ meant any other person than Peter. In fact, they can indicate no other, consistently with the rules of correct exegesis. Moreover, the words following *καὶ σοὶ διάτα* imply that there had been some previous gift or distinction. In short, the sense is : Thou art by *name Rock*; (i. e. thy name means Rock,) and suitably to that will be thy work and office ; for upon *thee* (i. e. upon

\* John i. 42.

† Synopsis Crit. in locum.

‡ See Synopsis Crit. in hunc locum.

§ Comparative View. App. p. 27.

thy preaching, as upon a rock) shall the foundation of the church be laid." It may, indeed, seem strange, that so natural and well founded an interpretation should have been passed over by any.—But that may be attributed *partly* to the causeless fears into which Protestants have been betrayed; lest, by admitting it, they should give a countenance to the Papal claim of supremacy; and *partly* to an idea that such a sense would be contrary to what is elsewhere said in Scripture, namely, that Christ is *the only foundation*. See 1 Cor. iii. 11. But as to the first, the fear is groundless: it being (as Bishop Middleton observes) difficult to see what advantage could be gained; unless we could evade the meaning of *σὰρξ οὐ ταῦτα κλεῖσται*, which follows. "And as to the latter fear, it is equally without foundation; since the two expressions are employed in two very different senses."\* You will pardon, Right Reverend Sir, this long extract from a Protestant commentator of deservedly high repute, who, whilst he asserts that the fears of Protestants were groundless, and endeavours to explain away the force of the text by referring it to a certain precedence of Peter in preaching the Gospel, betrays the weakness of Protestantism, and shows how the obvious meaning of Scripture has been obscured in order to avoid the admission of an authority it so clearly indicates. With regard to the interpretation of the entire passage, given by those who acknowledge the keys to be the emblem of power and authority, it is rather a bold stretch of ingenuity to understand this, as well as the other no less strong metaphor which precedes, of mere priority in announcing the Gospel to Jews and Gentiles. The same may be observed of the interpretation of Rosenmüller, who, however, renders a splendid tribute to the Catholic explanation, and completely explodes your distinction between *Petros* and *Petra*, and all the various modes whereby the manifest reference to Peter is sought to be evaded.

"The rock," says he, "is neither the confession of Peter nor Christ, pointing out himself by his finger, or by a shake of the head (which interpretations the context does not admit),

\* Bloomfield. Com. Mat. xvi. 18, 19, p. 79. Edit. Boston, 1837.

but Peter himself. 'The Lord, speaking in Syriac, used no diversity of name, but in both places said Cephas, as the French word *pierre* is said both of a proper and appellative noun. He pointed out Peter therefore either by his finger, or nod; for that gesture suited his purpose to explain the reason of giving him this name. So it was said of Abraham: 'Thy name shall be Abraham, because I have made thee father of many nations. Of Jacob: Israel shall be thy name, for thou actest as a prince with angels and men. So Christ says: Thou art called by me Peter, because thou wilt be as a rock. And he promises that he will build his Church on Peter. Allusion is made to the custom prevailing in Palestine of building houses that are exposed to floods and whirlwinds, on a rocky soil, that they may be able to resist the violence of waters and winds. Mat. vii. 24, 25. Therefore whosoever thinks of building a durable house, should above all look around for a rock, or firm ground: the rock is the first thing whence the work is to be begun.'\*

Although these observations, emanating as they do from men adverse to the Catholic church, are sufficient for my purpose, the two following extracts need no apology:

In "Gerard's Institutes of Biblical Criticism" is contained the following just observation—Canon 511: "The most obvious and natural sense is to be set aside only when it is absolutely contradictory to something plainly taught in Scripture." He then remarks that "the opposite way has been taken by all sects;" and quotes the 18th verse of the 16th chapter of St Matthew. "Thou, &c., building on Peter, is explained by some, as contrary to the faith that Christ is the only foundation (1 Cor. iii. 2.), and as favouring the succession of Peter and his successors; but the connexion shows that PETER IS HERE PLAINLY MEANT." Edition of Boston, 1823. Such is the language of this text-book of many Protestant Colleges and Theological Institutions, both in this country and in England.

\* Scholia in Novum Test., Tom. I, p. 336. Norumb. an. 1815.

The Reverend Mr Thompson of Glasgow, in his *Monasticon*, reprinted at Baltimore, 1829, p. 194, on this text, gives three interpretations. He thinks the two first unfounded, and thus quotes the third :

“ The third opinion is, that both the words *petros* and *petra* are here used as appellations of the Apostle ; and, consequently, Peter was the rock on which Christ said his Church should be built. To this the connexion and scope of the passage agree. There seems to be something forced in every other construction, and an inaptitude in the language and figure of the text in every attempt to construct the words otherwise. Protestants have betrayed unnecessary fears, and have, therefore, used all the HARDIHOOD of LAWLESS CRITICISM in their attempts to reason away the Catholic interpretation.”

Although not immediately connected with my present subject, I must notice what you call “ a strange error based upon a text in the Gospel of St John, which several of the popes of Rome have advanced in their solicitude to find authority for their favourite doctrine.” It is thus stated by Vigilius in a letter to Eleutherius : “ Although the election of all the Apostles was the same, yet it was granted to blessed Peter that he should be raised above the rest; whence he was called Cephas, because he was the head and the first of all the Apostles, and what precedes in the head, must necessarily be followed in the members.”\* You smile at this supposed literary blunder, because you imagine that Vigilius confounded Cephas, a Syrian term, with the Greek word, of somewhat similar sound, κεφαλή, signifying *the head*, and that he thence inferred that Peter was the head of the Apostles. The text which you bring forward does not, however, prove this mistake, for though the writer argues from Peter’s name that he was head and first of all the Apostles, he does not say that the name signified “ a head.” We make a like inference from the same appellation; yet we know the meaning of the term Cephas to be not “ *a head*,” but

\* Mansi, Tom. I, p. 77. Col. Conc. “ Unde et Cephas vocatur, quia caput et primus est omnium apostolorum.”

“*a rock.*” The relation of a foundation to a building may be compared to the relation of the head to the body, and consequently of a ruler to the spiritual kingdom of Christ.

The letter in question, as well as the other passage quoted by you, is, at best, of doubtful authenticity. The publisher of the collection of the Councils gives it as a part of some tract on the primacy, which came to light in the early part of the sixteenth century ; and he avows that his object is to preserve the various writings on that subject, whatever be their character. It has no place among the writings of Vigilius, given in their regular order, but is placed in the first volume with other documents confessedly spurious. In the genuine writings of that pontiff we find that he assumes higher ground than a mere verbal allusion. In his letter to the whole Catholic Church, speaking of the part which his predecessors Celestine and Leo took in the condemnation of heresy, he observes : “ Our God from heaven armed the pastoral office against these fierce errors : recommending which office to blessed Peter, with thrice repeated injunctions, he says, Feed my sheep : and justly was the charge of feeding them committed to him, whose glorious confession of faith was praised by the mouth of God. For when he confessed in a saving manner, and said : Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, perpetual blessedness is given him in return, and he is called the son of the dove, and receives the keys of the heavenly kingdom.\* You perceive, that Vigilius, addressing “ the whole Catholic Church,” does not rest his authority on a “ literary blunder,” but on the promises of our God and Saviour. To account for the supposed blunder, you observe that the name of this apostle “ appears to us in two shapes, indeed, because the Saviour spoke in Hebrew, and St John wrote in Greek, but they have the same signification.” What, Sir, refer to the language used by our Lord, after having, a few pages before, condemned such a reference as no better than “ a fanciful imagination calculated to prostrate the authority of the whole word of God ?”

\* Vigilius, p. ep. ad univ. Eccl. Tom. III. Conc. Hard. Col. 5.

The promise made by Jesus Christ to Peter was to be fulfilled after his resurrection. At the last supper, a contention having arisen among the Apostles which should be the greater, Christ took occasion to inculcate to all the necessity of humility and mutual condescension. Addressing Peter in a special manner, he apprised him of the violent efforts of Satan against them all, but gave him the consoling assurance that he had prayed for him in particular,\* that his faith might not fail. He reminded him of the obligation which his office would impose of confirming his brethren in the faith, and urged him to its performance : “ Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for THEE that THY faith fail not: and thou being once converted, CONFIRM THY BRETHREN.† An address of this kind on such an occasion shows that Peter was to be the superior of the rest, and on that account was the special object of the prayer of his divine Master—that being himself strong in faith, he might be able to confirm his brethren. That prayer did not prevent his grievous fall on that very night, although Christ be “ always heard for his reverence;” but it was directed to a sublimer object than the personal perseverance of Peter: it regarded the office which he was to exercise towards others, and the performance of which was so earnestly enjoined. When elevated to the pastoral dignity, he was to look around, from time to time,‡ to the various portions of his great charge, and

\* *ημας—σα*. The change of number, more apparent in the Greek text than in the English translation, shows that while Satan directed his efforts against *all* the Apostles, Christ prayed especially for *one*—PETER.

† Luke xxii. 32.

‡ *εν ποτε ιπιργειας*. The learned Grotius discovers in this expression a Hebraism, denoting the repetition of an act: “ tu quoque olim vicissim fratres confirma:” “ do thou also, on thy part, from time to time confirm thy brethren.” The Septuagint use this Greek verb for the Hebrew *השוב*, which, when united with another verb, may be rendered by the adverb, *again*. Thus: *ιπιργειας σωσους ημας*, “ Thou wilt again save us.” Ps lxxxv. 6. See Synopsis Sac. Crit. in hunc locum. Also, John xxi. 20, *ιπιργειας* means *turning towards*. Many eminent

strengthen, by his teaching and authority, those who might be weak in faith.

It is worthy of observation, that our Lord prepared the Apostles for his most important institutions by a promise made long before their actual establishment. Thus, in the course of his life, he promised to them all the power of binding and loosing ; and, after his resurrection, he gave them the power of forgiving and retaining sins, which he had previously and principally designated by that of loosing and binding. He had made a special promise to Peter that he would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and he accordingly gave to him, in an especial manner, the charge of feeding his lambs and sheep, thereby constituting him shepherd of the entire flock. The fact is thus related by the Evangelist St John : “ Jesus saith to Simon Peter : Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these ? He saith to him : Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him : Feed my lambs. He saith to him again : Simon, son of John, lovest thou me ? He saith to him : Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him : Feed my lambs. He saith to him the third time : Simon, son of John, lovest thou me ? Peter was grieved, because he said to him the third time, Lovest thou me ? And he said to him : Lord, thou knowest all things : thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him : Feed my sheep.”\*

There were present on this occasion, at least, Thomas the Apostle, and John and James, the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples, besides Nathaniel, of Cana in Galilee.† Christ addresses Peter alone, questions him as to his love, but is not satisfied with a declaration of ordinary love. He asks whether he has a special love for Him, greater than that which the others cherish ; “ Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these ?” He must then mean to confer a special prerogative,—to constitute him Pastor in a sense more sublime than

writers, however, explain it of the duty to be performed after his conversion, when he was to be constituted Pastor of the fold, and to receive the grace necessary to discharge faithfully his office.

\* John xxi. 15.

† John xxi. 2.

that in which Thomas, or John, or James, were Pastors. Peter having declared his greater love, and having appealed to the Saviour himself, as knowing his affection, receives the charge to feed the tender lambs of Christ: “ Feed my lambs.”\* The question is again and a third time repeated, not to ascertain what Christ so well knew,—not merely to require the three protestations of love as an atonement for the three denials, and a condition for elevating him to the pastoral office, since he receives the authority and commission on his first declaration of love,—but to point out in a strong manner the peculiar and sublime character of his pastoral authority. He is first commanded to feed the lambs of Christ, and the term used denotes strictly the act of giving them food or pasture, that he may understand that his duty is to give the pastures of eternal life—the divine doctrines of faith—to the weakest, lowliest of the faithful, that their souls may be therewith nourished. On his second protestation of love, the nature of his office is more fully developed. He is told to do all the duties of a shepherd;† not only to give them salutary pastures, and lead them to the refreshing streams, but to tend, to watch over, to restrain, to bring back the stray sheep to the fold, to cast away the contagious, and in all things to imitate Him whose place he holds, whose sheep he tends, whose name he bears—the one Shepherd of the one fold. Again, the Saviour demands the declaration of his love, and the afflicted Apostle appeals to Him, as the searcher of hearts, to whom all things lie open, and who consequently knows the sincerity of his love: “ Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee.” The pastoral charge is then extended to the sheep of Christ—to those who are as the parents of the tender lambs—those who bring them forth in Christ: “ Feed my sheep.”‡ The term by which this exercise of pastoral care is

\* *βίστε τα ἀγρία μου.*

† *ποιησάντα τα πρόβατά μου.* The Vulgate read *agrius*. The Greek term is taken for governing, as kings were called shepherds of the people: *ποιησας λαον*. See Homer, *passim*.

‡ *βίσκε τα πρόβατά μου.*

expressed, signifies *to give food*, because it is the chief duty of the great Shepherd to place in salutary pastures the sheep, that they and their tender offspring may be nourished. Dropping the metaphor, he must communicate to them, in its integrity, the divine doctrine, such as he received it from Christ, that they may be fit to teach others. His duty towards them is chiefly to instruct them, though, as shepherd of the entire flock, he can wield, even in their regard, the staff of pastoral correction. Hence it is manifest that blessed Peter, and in him his successors, received from Christ full power to feed, to rule, and govern the Church of God; that is, the entire flock of Christ, as the Council of Florence defined.

The character of this authority is beautifully represented by the image of a Shepherd, which is presented in so tender a manner in the Old as well as the New Testament; and the accomplishment of the divine design is indicated of uniting Jews and Gentiles in one fold under one Shepherd. Arnobius, a French writer of the fifth century, thus expatiates on the appointment of Peter to the office of Pastor: “Behold the penitent Apostle, who is the bishop of bishops, is relieved, and a higher dignity is given to him after his tears, than was taken away from him at his fall. This I prove from the fact that none of the Apostles was styled Shepherd: for the Lord Jesus Christ alone said: I am the good Shepherd, and again my sheep follow me. He granted, then, after his resurrection, this holy name to penitent Peter; and he who was denied, gave to him who had denied him, the power which he alone had.”\*

The justness of our interpretation is fully sustained by some eminent Protestant annotators on this place. “The true interpretation,” says Bloomfield, in reference to the comparison made in the first interrogation, “seems to be that of the ancient, and many of the most eminent modern commentators, as Lampe, Campbell, Kuinoel, and Tittman, who assign the following sense: Dost thou love me more than those do? It is proper to observe, that though our Lord asks the question thrice, yet the

\* Arnobius in finem, Ps. cxxxviii.

admonition, which each time follows it up, is not quite the same ; for *βιοτείνω* signifies simply to feed, provide with pasture ; *ποικιλάτω* both *to feed* and *to tend* ; the former being especially applicable to *ἀρνηταί* (meaning young, raw professors), and the latter to *προβάτα*, or the more advanced and mature professors. And the notion of tending necessarily carries with it that of guiding and governing.”\*

I submit these critical remarks of the learned vicar of Bisbrooke, to show that, although many Protestants, from a dread of finding the privileges of Peter in these words of Christ, have given to them a forced, inane, and even ridiculous interpretation ; yet that others, who have a character for learning and impartiality, admit the substantial correctness of our interpretation, whilst they deny the necessary consequence of their own admissions, and, to use the words of St Hilary, offer violence to the glorious words of our Redeemer.

I know not in what more solemn manner Christ could have manifested his will that Peter should govern the Church by his authority. He declared him the rock on which it was built—he gave him the keys, the emblem of power and authority, thereby clearly appointing him the ruler of his spiritual kingdom. Of him, especially, he declared, that what he should bind on earth would be bound in heaven ; what he should loose on earth would be loosed in heaven. For him, especially, he prayed that his faith might not fail—and to him alone he gave the charge to confirm his brethren. In fine, after exacting from him a protestation of special love, he commissioned him to feed his lambs and sheep ; to perform towards both all the duties of a Shepherd.

The actual exercise of the pastoral and governing authority of Peter is clearly marked in the divine Scriptures. One of the most solemn acts of authority is to create subordinate pastors, and especially to communicate the Apostolic power and character. Judas had left his place vacant in the Apostolic college, and Peter took the earliest opportunity to fill the vacancy.

\* Notes on Greek text of John xxi. 15.

Whilst the Apostles and other disciples of the Lord, to the number of about one hundred and twenty, were persevering with one mind in prayer, awaiting the Holy Spirit, who was promised them, “Peter, rising up in the midst of the brethren,”\* urged the necessity of choosing one “to take the place of this ministry and Apostleship.” Though he did not act at once and of himself, but sought the advice and concurrence of the brethren, yet, by originating the measure, he showed that his office imposed on him the duty of seeing that the vacancy was filled, whilst he manifested condescension and regard for the suggestions and wishes of his inferiors in authority. He could, doubtless, as St Chrysostom observes, have acted with entire independence, but he had been educated in the school of humility, and learned to imitate Him whose power he was commissioned to exercise: “How fervent he is,” exclaims Chrysostom, “how he manifests that the flock was committed by Christ to his charge,—see how he is the prince of this band, and every where is the first to speak.—Why did he not alone ask of Christ to give him some one to be substituted in the place of Judas? Why do they not rather of themselves make the choice? Peter had already become better than he was.—Consider how Peter does all according to the common wish of the disciples—nothing by his own authority, nothing in an imperious manner.—Men, brethren, he says: since the Lord called his disciples brethren, it is still more becoming that Peter should thus address his fellow disciples, wherefore he spoke to all present; Behold the dignity of the Church: behold the angelic state of *harmony and love*.—Why does he consult them on this matter? Lest it should become an occasion of dissention and dispute.—But he himself points out those from whom the choice should be made: ‘of these men who have been with us all the time.’ Was it not lawful for himself to make the choice? It was, and, indeed, pre-eminently lawful:†

\* Acts i. 15.

† Quid? an non licebat ipsi eligere? licebat, et quidem maxime.—P. 182, Vol. III. St Chrys. edit. Par. 1687.

but he abstains from it, lest he should appear to favour any one. Justly he first of all takes to himself authority in this matter, as having them all under his control; for to him Christ said: "thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren."\* It is pleasing to be able to show in what light this act was viewed by so bright an ornament of the Greek Church in the fourth century. It is not, then, as you assert, we who strive to find Scriptural authority for the Primacy, but one of the most illustrious men of antiquity,—one occupying the chair of the rival city, the new Rome, who recognises a splendid instance of the moderate use of supreme power in the conduct of Peter on this occasion.

A still more illustrious exercise of his high office, as "guardian of the faith,"† occurs in the history of the first Council of Jerusalem. Great excitement was caused at Antioch by certain Judaizing Christians, who insisted that the converts from the Gentiles should be subjected to circumcision and the legal observances. "Paul and Barnabas had no small contest with them,"‡ but were unable to induce all to acquiesce in their judgment; wherefore it was determined that they "and certain others of the other side, should go up to the Apostles and priests to Jerusalem about this question." "The Apostles and ancients came together to consider of this matter, and when there was much disputing, Peter, rising up, said to them: Men, brethren, you know that in former days God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe. And God, who knoweth the hearts, gave them testimony, giving to them the Holy Ghost as well as to us: and made no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why

\* St Chrys. hom. III. in I cap. Act. pp. 181, 182.

† The appellation given to Celestine, as successor of Peter, in the General Council of Ephesus, an. 431: Κελσίνη τῷ πύλακι τῆς πίστεως, one of the acclamations after the public reading of his doctrinal exposition of the faith against the heresy of Eutyches. Conc. Eph. Act. II. T. I. Conc. Hard. Col. 1472.

‡ Acts xv. 2.

tempt you God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we believe to be saved even as they." I pray you to observe the result of this discourse: "All the multitude held their peace."<sup>\*</sup> Previously there had been at Antioch great opposition and contest, notwithstanding the reverence due to the Apostolic character in Paul and Barnabas: the collision of sentiment had been renewed in the Council with considerable feeling. Peter authoritatively speaks, reminds them that he had been chosen to announce the Gospel to the Gentiles, that God had given evidences of his favour towards them, reproaches his brethren with seeking unnecessarily to burden them with the multifarious observances of the ceremonial law: and declares the great principle of faith in Jesus Christ as the only foundation of hope for Jew or Gentile. No sooner has he spoken than all acquiesce: no dissenting voice is heard, no murmur: all opposition ceases; and whoever rises to speak only confirms, like Paul and Barnabas, by the narrative of miraculous facts, what Peter had declared of the favour shown by God to the Gentiles; or, like James, refers to the prophecies, adding the suggestion<sup>†</sup> of the measures to be decreed, that the principle might be carried into successful execution. I do not see how any man can read the simple history of this controversy, by the inspired writer, and not perceive the great weight of Peter's authority in its termination. The letter of the Council, drawn up in the name of the Apostles and ancients, expressive of the principle laid down by Peter, and of the practical measure suggested by James, is declared to emanate from the Holy Ghost: "it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us."<sup>‡</sup> The writers of antiquity speak of it as the sentence or decree of Peter. In the third century,

\* Acts xv. 12.

<sup>†</sup> *xεινω* "I judge," is the simple expression of sentiment, whether authoritative, or void of authority. See Thucydid. iv. 60. It corresponds to the Latin *censeo*.

<sup>‡</sup> Ib. v. 28.

Tertullian describes it as the exercise of his power of binding and loosing : “ the decree of Peter loosed such things of the law as were set aside, and bound fast such as were retained.”\* In the fourth, St Jerom says that Peter was the author of this decree,† and the celebrated Theodoret, bishop of Cyrus, speaks of the controversy, as a matter referred by Paul to Peter, that by his supreme authority it might be definitively settled. “ If Paul,” says he in his letter to Pope Leo, “ who was the herald of truth, the organ of the Holy Spirit, had recourse to the great Peter, in order to obtain a solution from him concerning the observances of the law for those who disputed at Antioch on this subject, with much greater reason we, who are abject and weak, have recourse to your Apostolic See, that we may receive from you remedies for the wounds of the churches. For it is fit that you in all things should be first.”‡ Cave explains the words of Paul, that “ he went to Jerusalem to see Peter,” of his going up on this occasion.§

Your assertions that this Council was not called by Peter, that Peter did not preside in it, and that its decrees were not confirmed by him, are, to say the least, perfectly gratuitous. He was evidently the leading character in the Council, as Cave admits. Chrysostom calls our attention to the wisdom with which he permitted the discussion, and then authoritatively interposed : “ See,” says he, “ he permits the inquiry and dispute to go on, and then he himself speaks :”|| and he observes it as an evidence of the harmony and condescension which prevailed, that Paul was allowed to speak after Peter had pronounced judgment : “ See, Paul speaks after Peter, and no one closes his mouth.”¶

\* Tertullian, *l. de pudicitia.*

† “ Principem hujus fuisse decreti.” S. Hieron. Aug. Ep. 75, alias xi. inter August. S. 8, col. 172. Tom. II.

‡ Theodoret. ad Leonem.

§ Petrum ibi convenit occasione, ut videtur, Concilii Apostolici—cujus Petrus pars magna fuit.” Sac. Ap. p. 6.

|| S. Chrys. hom. xxxii. in c. xv. Act. Ap. p. 259. Tom. III. Edit. Paris, 1687.

¶ Hom. xxxiii. p. 260.

To establish the primacy of Peter, it is not necessary to prove that he exercised, at all times, and in every circumstance, his prerogative to its utmost extent: since moderation, condescension and humility, had been prescribed to him by his divine master; and Chrysostom testifies, that in this spirit he abstained from appointing the Apostle to fill the place of Judas, which, nevertheless, he was fully authorized to do. The performance, however, of any act which supposes superior power, is a proof that he possessed it; because an Apostle of Christ was not likely to usurp a power not communicated by the Redeemer. When, therefore, we see him stand forward, and silence the disputants by his meek rebuke, we cannot fail to recognise him as the high judge of religious controversy.

It has pleased the Holy Spirit to leave on record but a few of the circumstances connected with this model of councils: but these few sufficiently show that Peter was there, that he either called the council, or assented to its convocation, that he spoke with authority and effect, silencing all disputation by his discourse, and that the decree was in strict conformity with his judgment. The forms are of little importance where the authority is fully respected and admitted. To be Prince and Primate in the Church of God, it was not necessary that he should stand alone, separated from his colleagues in the apostolate and episcopacy, and resting solely on the prerogative of his station. It is delightful to see him in the council of his brethren, causing the ardour of disputation to subside by authoritative instruction, and enlightening the minds of his colleagues, and of the faithful, by unfolding to them the oracles of God. The decree which expresses his judgment, and that of his colleagues, and the faith of the whole Church, is no way derogatory to his high prerogative.

The perpetuity of the privileges of the Prince of the Apostles in the Church is a necessary consequence of the divine institution of the Primacy. It is the foundation which must remain as long as the edifice which it supports subsists—it is the governing power, without which the kingdom of Christ would be divided and brought to desolation—it is the pastoral office, by which the sheep of Christ are

to be for ever preserved in unity, and to be one fold under one Shepherd. As the perpetuity of the Apostolic commission to teach, baptize, and perform the other functions of the sacred ministry is admitted, though the words were addressed to the Apostles only, with the assurance, however, that Christ would be with them till the consummation of ages; so must the perpetuity of the governing power and pastoral office, originally conferred on Peter, be acknowledged, especially since, in immediate connexion with it, the assurance was given that the gates of hell should not prevail,—a promise which at least indirectly regards the rock on which the Church is built. “Neither against the rock on which the Church is built, nor against the Church shall the gates of hell prevail.”\*

That Peter founded the Church of Rome, and in conjunction with Paul exercised there his Apostolic ministry, and that both Apostles died martyrs for the faith in that city, are facts attested by all antiquity, and freely admitted by the most respectable Protestant writers. “We intrepidly affirm,” says Cave, “with all antiquity, that Peter was at Rome, and for some time resided there.”† You deny that he was Bishop of Rome, because the Apostolic commission was general “to the whole world:” but the government of that particular Church did not prevent his discharge of all the duties of the Apostleship.‡ The early writers, as Irenæus, speak conjointly of Peter and Paul, as founding the Church of Rome, because of their joint labours, and their martyrdom in that city at the close of their apostolic ministry: some, as Epiphanius, designate them both its bishops, as Cave remarks; but whenever the Roman See is spoken of in reference to one Apostle as its first bishop, that Apostle is uniformly Peter, and not Paul. Hence, it is called

\* Origen, in C. xvi. Mat. Tom. XII., p. 520.

† Cave Sæc. Apost. S. Petrus, p. 5, col. 1 Edit. Genevæ, an. 1705.

‡ “All, both ancient and modern, will, I think, agree with me that Peter may be called Bishop of Rome in a less strict sense, inasmuch as he laid the foundations of this Church, and rendered it illustrious by his martyrdom.” This admission is made by Cave, though he questions whether Peter should be styled Bishop of Rome in a strict sense. P. 8

by St Cyprian, “the place of Peter,”\* by St Jerom, “the chair of Peter,”† and the succession from Peter in that See is avowed, by St Augustin, to be one of the great evidences of truth which retained him in the Catholic communion. “I am kept,” says he, “by the succession of bishops from the very See of the Apostle Peter, to whom our Lord, after his resurrection, intrusted the feeding of his sheep, down to the present bishop.”‡ Ambrose, the master of Augustin, styles Peter “Bishop of the Roman Church.”§ Whatever share the Apostle Paul may have had in the government of that Church, it must have necessarily had one bishop, since the general practice of antiquity, and the positive testimonies of the ancients, unanimously teach that there can be but one bishop of one Church. To suppose that neither Apostle governed it as bishop, is to create an anomaly in the organization of the churches, by leaving one without a special ruler. In whatever way we view the matter, and whatever share in the administration we may ascribe to St Paul, the Church of Rome is the heiress of both apostles, sanctified by their labours, and enriched by their doctrine and their blood. She claims all the privileges and powers which either enjoyed or exercised; and if she rests with peculiar emphasis on those of Peter, it is because his privileges were more sublime, and of a more enduring character, than those of the Apostle of the Gentiles. I care not then to insist on the application of the term “bishop,” to Peter as governor of the Roman Church, although it is perfectly applicable: it is unquestionable that he governed it, at least in his apostolic character, and died whilst so governing it. The authority with which he was invested was a fundamental principle of Church organization, which could not cease without the destruction of the Church itself. It must then continue in the bishops who succeed him in the government of that Church, over which he presided up to the time of his martyrdom.

\* S. Cyprian, Ep. ad Antonian.      † Jerom. ep. ad Damas.

‡ Aug. l. adv. ep. Man. fundam. C. IV. Tom. VIII., p 153.

§ S. Ambros. l. 3 de Sac. c. 1, §. 6. Tom. II.

## LETTER III.

### OBJECTIONS FROM SCRIPTURE AGAINST THE PRIMACY.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

HAVING reviewed the Scriptural evidence of the Primacy, which you pass over rather slightly, it is but just to meet the objections which you derive from some passages of Scripture. You say that the rock was the Redeemer; for "no one can lay another foundation, but that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus."<sup>\*</sup> To have the true meaning of this passage, and to perceive the weakness of the objection grounded on it, the context must be attended to, from which it will at once appear, that the foundation of which St Paul speaks is different from that mentioned by Christ. The Apostle addressing the Corinthians, whom he had brought to the knowledge of Christian faith, says: "You are God's building. According to the grace of God that is given me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For no man can lay another foundation, but that which is laid—which is Christ Jesus." The Apostle, anxious to maintain his spiritual children in the integrity of faith, compares them to a building erected, by his own hands, on faith in our divine Redeemer; and he declares that no other foundation can be laid. In Him we must believe; in Him we must hope; Him in all things we must obey; for, as St Peter expresses the same idea in clearer terms, "there is not salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given to

\* 1 Cor. ii. 11.

men, whereby we must be saved.”\* This is the obvious meaning of St Paul.† The text has no relation whatever to the promise of Christ to Peter, except the illustration of a different truth by a similar image. Christ wished to signify to Peter the reward of his faith by the authority which he would enjoy in his Church, and with this view he likened the Church to a building, himself to an architect, Peter to a rock on which the foundation of the building would be laid. The similitude is apt and expressive in both cases, but confusion is necessarily produced when the two similitudes are confounded together, and what is said of Christ in the one place, where he is represented as the foundation, is applied to him in the other, where he speaks of himself as the architect. The passages are parallel in their character, but different in their object: in both, the foundation is distinguished from the architect. Where Paul is the architect, Christ is the foundation: where Christ is the architect, he makes Peter the foundation. Do we then reject Christ? God forbid! He is for us also the foundation of faith,—the basis on which our hopes of immortality are built. Our sentiments are correctly and eloquently expressed by one of the most distinguished of Peter’s successors, the first Leo, with whose name posterity has associated the appellation of “Great.” Paraphrasing the address of Christ to Peter, recorded in the sixteenth chapter of St Matthew, he says: “As my Father has manifested my divinity to thee, I make known to thee thy dignity: for thou art PETER, that is, as I am the inviolable rock, the corner-stone, who make both one,—I the foundation, other

\* Acts iv. 12.

† The rule prescribed by the Protestant critic, Gerard, should here be attended to, 456: “Every term should be considered as it stands, in the proposition of which it makes a part, and explained, not by itself, but so as to bring out the real sense of that whole proposition.” He shows the violation of this rule by an Antinomian, who should understand the rock on which the wise man builds his house, Matt. vii. 24, to be Christ, the Rock of Ages. The rule is equally violated, when the rock, of which Christ speaks, Matt. xvi. 18, is understood to be himself. See Gerard’s Institutes, p. 134.

than which no one can lay—nevertheless thou also art a Rock, because thou art strengthened by my power, so that what things belong to me by nature, ARE COMMON TO THEE WITH ME BY PARTICIPATION.”\* Every prerogative then which we acknowledge in Peter is the gift of his bounty; all authority emanates from him. In fact, Bishop Marsh, and, after him, Bloomfield admit that there can be no real difficulty in reconciling these two passages, because Christ and Peter are called the foundation in a very different sense. “The Apostles, generally, are in other parts of the New Testament called the foundation on which the Church is built;† but Peter is specially called such, and even designated a rock, to denote his peculiar strength and connexion with the Church.”

You adduce various passages of Scripture in which pride and domination are condemned, and humility is prescribed: and you assert that “all these instances are related as occurring subsequently to the gift of the keys to Peter.” You suppose, that if the words of Christ had the meaning which we assign them, he would have reproved his disciples when contending about superiority, and “have reminded them that he had constituted Peter the governor and chief already.” Allow me to observe, that Peter did not receive the power which was promised to him, until after the resurrection, when Christ gave him the commission to feed his lambs and sheep. It is not wonderful that the Apostles did not at that time fully understand the sublime promise of the Saviour, for, as yet, they were slow of understanding, and had no adequate idea of the institutions which Christ meant to establish. Already, indeed, they saw a marked preference manifested for Peter, since Christ paid the tribute for him as well as for himself, and gave other indications of peculiar favour: but he was known to cherish a tender love for John, and his kindness towards all rendered it still a matter of question which was the greatest favourite with their divine master. He took occasion from this, and other circumstances

\* S. Leo. Mag. Serm. 3, de assumptione sua ad Pontificatum.

† Bloomfield Com. Matt. xvi., and quotes Eph. ii. 20, and Rev. xxi. 14.

which showed his disciples' imperfection, to teach them—not equality, but humility. Thus, when the mother of the sons of Zebedee sought for her children, that they might sit, one on his right hand, and the other on his left, by his throne, “the ten hearing it were moved with indignation against the two brethren.” He called them to him, and observed, that lordly domination characterized the rulers of this earth, but that, if they wished to be great in his sight, they should humble themselves, and become as servants to each other: “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered, but to minister, and to give his life a redemption for many.”\* In this surely was implied, that there was to be amongst them a difference of rank; but, nevertheless, that the highest should imitate the humility of their Lord and Master, so that the exercise of authority, however great, should be marked by kind and fraternal feeling. This divine lesson was inculcated by Peter, when, addressing his colleagues in the sacred ministry, he bade them “feed the flock of God” entrusted to their charge, not domineering over the portion of the Lord’s inheritance committed to them, “but being made a pattern of the flock from the heart.”† The exercise of power is, in all circumstances, to be tempered with humility; but the power is not, on that account, less real or efficacious.

In the second passage objected by you, Christ forbids pharisaical vanity and ostentation, which delights in “salutations in the market-place,” and in titles of distinction: “be not you called Rabbi. For one is your master, and all you are brethren.”‡ If this passage be alleged to prove that no one of the Apostles was superior to the other, it may be, with equal propriety, used to show that the Apostles were in no respect superior to the multitude, for the discourse was not addressed to the Apostles alone, but “to the multitude and to his disciples.”§ You are scarcely prepared for this perfect equality. You admit superior powers in the Apostolic college, and you consequently

\* Matt. xx. 28.

† 1 Peter v. 2, 3.

‡ Matt. xxiii. 8.

§ Matt. xxiii. 1.

cannot urge this passage farther than to show that vanity is reprehensible in all, whether they be the titled dignitaries of the church, or the less conspicuous members of the laity.

The ninth chapter of Luke affords you another objection. "There entered a thought into them which of them should be greater;" and their divine Master "took a child, and set him by him, and said to them: whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me. For he that is the least among you all, he is the greatest."<sup>\*</sup> The Lord thus beautifully insinuates humility, which is the best disposition for elevation to the high office of the Apostolate. He says nothing to exclude the superiority of one above the rest in dignity or rank; but teaches all that the lowliest in station may be greatest in merit before God, provided he be profoundly humble.

The objection derived from the twenty-second chapter of Luke is similar to that which you have before advanced, from the twentieth chapter of Matthew, and which I have already explained. It regards the mode in which superior power is to be exercised: "he who is the greatest among you, let him be as the least, and he that is the leader as he that serveth. For which is greater, he that sitteth at table, or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at table? But I am in the midst of you, as he that serveth."<sup>†</sup> There was then a leader, there was one greatest among them, but he was to imitate Him who was above all, but who nevertheless humbled himself as the servant of all. He sufficiently indicated the leader, when, addressing Peter on that occasion, he told him to "confirm his brethren."<sup>‡</sup>

You found the next objection on the twentieth chapter of St John's Gospel, wherein Christ, addressing all the Apostles, says: "Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, I also send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."<sup>§</sup> You argue that, as no distinction is

\* Luke xxii. 26.

† Ibid. xxii. 26.

‡ Ibid. 32.

§ John. xx. 21.

made between Peter and the other Apostles, the power conferred on all was alike, and that “as the character of his office is not to be determined by the time when it was first promised, but by the rights actually conferred, it seems abundantly evident that this passage decides the whole controversy.” There might be something more than plausibility in this reasoning, had the same Evangelist neglected to record the special commission to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ, given to Peter alone, after a thrice repeated protestation of loving his Lord more than the others loved him. Peter received, with the others, the power of forgiveness, which he and they were to exercise; but separately and apart from them, he received the pastoral commission to govern all the sheep of Christ, and, as the vicegerent and visible representative of Christ, to be the one shepherd of the one fold. The character of his office is determined both by the promise, which was special, and by the rights actually conferred, which fully corresponded with the sublime promise. Peter had powers common to the whole Apostolic college; he had, besides, authority peculiarly his own.

I have already shown that the Apostolic commission presented no obstacle to the administration of a particular Church by an Apostle. He had privilege to exercise his power every where, but he was not necessarily obliged to be without any fixed residence or See, as is evident from the case of the Apostle James, who occupied the See of Jerusalem. As you here promise presently to prove from Irenæus that Linus, and not St Peter, is set down as the first bishop of that city, it is but just to observe that you labour under a misconception of that writer’s meaning, as will appear when we shall come to the examination of his testimony.

You observe, that on some occasions Peter appears, in the Acts of the Apostles, “like one more ruled than ruling.” The chief instance which you give is, that when the conversion of the Samaritans, through the ministry of Philip, was made known to the Apostles who were in Jerusalem, they sent to them “Peter and John.”\* But, surely, this is too slight a

\* Acts viii. 14.

ground for questioning the superior authority of Peter, established by so many and such strong Scriptural proofs. A superior cannot, indeed, be authoritatively sent by his subjects, yet he is said sometimes to be sent when he is induced to go at their solicitation. Were we to rely on a similar argument,—the equivocal meaning of a word; were we to oppose it to solemn and clear and express testimonies of Scripture, conveying power and authority, you would surely regard us with a feeling of pity, if not of indignation.

After the baptism of Cornelius, when Peter went up to Jerusalem, they who were of the circumcision disputed against him,\* and Peter explains the whole matter, concluding in the 17th verse by saying: “Who was I, that I could oppose God?” “Neither he nor his accusers on this occasion,” you observe, “seem to have had any notion of his superior dignity.” But is it a matter of surprise that a people so attached to their religious traditions as the Jews, and so recently converted to Christianity, should have viewed with displeasure a measure so novel, and so repugnant to their ideas, and should have been wanting in due respect for the authority of the first Pastor? You need only call to mind the frequent murmurings of their forefathers against Moses, even shortly after many and stupendous prodigies had convinced them that he was the chosen servant of God, and was acting in obedience to the divine will. Peter was not unconscious of his authority, but did not deem it unworthy of his high dignity to explain the motives of his conduct, and thus take away from their weak minds the occasion of scandal and dissention. The recognition of the high authority of Peter, even by the converts from Judaism, as well as his own sense of that authority, is manifest from the history of the Council of Jerusalem, of which I have already treated. I must refer you to my remarks for the solution of the objection which you seek to draw from it.

You mention, as something unsavourable to the prerogative of Peter, that “the whole of the remaining chapters of the

\* Acts xi. 2.

book of the Acts, is devoted chiefly to the labours of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and Peter is hardly named again." Is it possible that you seriously object this circumstance? St Luke, the writer of the Acts, was the companion of Paul in his travels, as the Apostle himself testifies.\* He gives a compendium of the chief events which marked the rise of the Church until the conversion of Saul, and thence confines himself, almost exclusively, to the subsequent history of St Paul, having been himself an eye witness of many of the events which he records.

The arguments which you produce to prove that St Paul acknowledged no superior authority in Peter, are, to say the least, weak indeed. To convince the Galatians that his gospel was divinely revealed, St Paul observes that, on his conversion, he had not gone to Jerusalem, to the Apostles who had preceded him in the faith: but what he adds is worthy of your most serious consideration: "Three years after, I came to Jerusalem to see Peter, and stayed with him fifteen days."† Can we suppose that this was a visit of mere courtesy, and not rather an official act of respect to the authority of the prince of the Apostles, with whom Paul wished to consult on the important concerns of the Church? The Greek verb suggests the idea of consultation, or inquiry.‡ "Peter," says Chrysostom, "was the organ and prince of the Apostles: wherefore Paul went up to see him in preference to the rest."§ Cave himself, as you have seen, believes that the visit was made with a view to obtain the decision of the controversy about the observance of the ceremonial law.

The reproof given by St Paul to Cephas,|| is alleged by you, after most Protestant writers on the subject, as evidence that he recognised in Peter no superior authority. The Fathers, however, discovered in it nothing more than the liberty which an inferior may use in admonishing his superior, when the

\* 2 Cor. viii. 18. Col. iv. 14. 2 Tim. iv. 11. Philem. 24.

† Gal. i. 18.

‡ *ἰσογένειας, to confer with.* See Jones's Greek Lexicon.

§ S. Chrys. hom. 87 in Joan.

|| Gal. ii. 11.

conduct of the latter is such as is likely to be prejudicial to the interests of truth. No station, however elevated, places man beyond the reach of respectful admonition, or even strong reproof, if his conduct deserve it. "Paul," says Tertullian, "reproved Peter, for no other reason, however, than the change of his mode of living, which he varied according to the class of persons with whom he associated, not for any corruption of divine truth."\* In regard to this fact, Augustin observes: "a just liberty is to be admired in Paul, and holy humility in Peter."†‡

You avail yourself of the statement of St Paul, that to him "was committed the Gospel of the uncircumcision, as to Peter

\* Tertullian, l. v. contra Marcion, c. 3.

† Aug. Ep. 82. n. 22. Nov. edit.

‡ I have granted to Bishop Hopkins that Cephas here mentioned is the same as Peter, as I do not wish to encumber the investigation with a question of a mere critical character. The Fathers of the Church generally take him to be the same, but in a question of this kind, totally independent of doctrine, a mistake may be supposed without disrespect to their venerable authority. It is certain that Clement of Alexandria maintained that Cephas, who was reproved by St Paul, was one of the seventy disciples, and Eusebius has recorded this testimony, without any indication of dissent. Eusebius, l. i. c. 12. In all ages this sentiment of Clement has had advocates, although the contrary opinion has been always more general. Among modern writers the learned Feller, in his historical dictionary, manifestly favours the less generally received opinion. Hardouin expressly defends it. Kerkherdere in his *conatus norus de Cepha reprehenso*, published at Louvain in 1713, maintains it, and Molkenbuhr, in 1785, published a Scriptural critical dissertation to the same effect. The authors, both Catholic and Protestant, who have confounded the two, are strangely embarrassed to find a time at which the reproof of Peter can be supposed to have happened, some placing it before, some after the Council of Jerusalem. The simple fact seems to be that Cephas, one of the disciples, being reproved sharply by Paul for tergiversation of conduct, "no small contest" ensued, which led to the reference to Peter and James and their colleagues at Jerusalem. The conduct of Peter in defending his reception of Cornelius into the Church, and his bold reproof of the Judaizing Christians in the Council, give us a view of his character totally inconsistent with the dissimulation of the weak disciple.

was that of the circumcision ;”\* but surely you know that these expressions do not signify that the exclusive charge of Gentiles or Jews was given to either apostle. The universal character of the apostolic commission regards not only places, but classes of men : and the Apostle only intimates that the chief exercise of his own ministry was to be among the Gentiles, whilst Peter was chiefly to exert his zeal for the conversion of the Jews.† Peter was the first to receive the Gentiles into the Church, in the person of Cornelius and his family ; and you cannot suppose that he, or any of the Apostles, had not full authority to exercise his ministry in favour of all classes of men. Besides, there were at Rome many Jews, amongst whom Peter no doubt especially laboured, whilst Paul more particularly devoted himself to the conversion of the Gentiles. Each, as opportunity was offered, extended his zeal to Jew and Gentile ; but the general superintendance of all still remained in him whom Christ had commanded to feed his lambs and sheep, and confirm his brethren.

The order observed by St Paul in the mention of those who were regarded as pillars of the church, “James, Cephas, and John,” seems to you evidence against the primacy of Peter. To the learned Hardouin and others it appeared to favour the opinion that Cephas here mentioned was a disciple, and not the Apostle ; because in all the Gospels, and in the writings of St Paul, wherever Peter is named, he uniformly precedes all others, unless where the latter place is the more honourable from the nature of the subject,‡ and by St Matthew he is expressly styled “the first.”§ This, though the least proof of

\* Gal. ii. 7.

† “St Peter was chiefly but not entirely occupied by the Jews, and St Paul chiefly, but not wholly, with the Gentiles,” says Bloomfield on this passage. See also Synopsis Crit. in locum.

‡ Gal. i. 12 , iii. 22.

§ Mat. x. 2. ὁ πρῶτος, “the first.” That this is not a mere ordinal adjective is proved by the fact that no such adjective is placed after the names of the other Apostles enumerated in this list. It is remarkable that the Evangelists observe no order in the catalogues they have given, except in regard of two—Peter and Judas. The first of whom always

his superiority, affords no slight presumption of it. Waiving, however, whatever advantage might be derived from this circumstance, I shall beg, in reply to your objection, to state that the name of Cephas is altogether wanting in this place in a most ancient manuscript, which Grotius judges to be correct.\* Moreover the incidental mention of the name of the Apostle, without regard to the precedence of his office, cannot render questionable his authority.

You labour to prove that Paul, and not Peter, was the first founder of the Church of Rome, and you do not hesitate to assert that ‘on this point the book of the Acts is clear and positive.’ But, sir, all that is clear from that divine history is that Paul was brought to Rome in chains, and that during his stay there, which lasted two years, he instructed those who had recourse to him at his own hired lodging.† Before he had seen that city,‡ he wrote his Epistle to the Romans, in which

is placed at the head of the catalogue; the last uniformly occupies the lowest place. The eloquent bishop of Meaux presents, at one view, the various circumstances in which Peter appears foremost in the Gospels: “Peter,” says he, “appears the first on all occasions: the first to confess the faith; the first to express his obligation of love; the first of all the Apostles who saw Christ after his resurrection, as he was the first to bear testimony to this fact before all the people. We find him first, when there was question of filling up the number of the Apostles; the first who confirmed the faith by a miracle, the first to convert the Jews, the first to receive the Gentiles; in short, every thing occurs to establish his supremacy. The power divided among many, imports its restriction: conferred on one alone, *over all and without exception*, it bears the evidence of its plenitude. All receive the same power, but not in the same degree, nor to the same extent. Jesus Christ commences by the chief, and in the person of the chief develops all his power—in order that we should learn that the ecclesiastical authority, being originally centred in one individual, has been diffused only on the condition that it should always be reflected back on the principle of its unity; and that all they who share in it should be inseparably connected with that See, which is the common centre of all churches.”—Bossuet. Disc. sur l’unité de l’Eglise, première partie.

\* See Critic. Sac. Synop. in hunc locum.

† Acts xxviii. 30.

‡ Five or six years before his imprisonment, about the year of Christ

he declares his earnest desire to see them, to be consoled by the evidence of their faith, the fame of which had already spread to the utmost limits of the empire.\* You have fallen into the strange mistake of quoting this epistle in proof of the success of his preaching in that city, whilst he declares in it that he had never been there : “ I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that I have often purposed to come to you (and have been prevented hitherto), that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other nations.”†

You complain that “ after all this St Paul should be made to act a secondary part to St Peter in founding the Church of Rome, and that the Sacred Oracles should thus become subordinate to the testimony of tradition.” But it is manifest, from the passage of Scripture just quoted, that St Paul was not the original founder of that Church, and that it was flourishing and celebrated before his eye had ever rested on that magnificent city. Tradition comes to our aid on a point not stated in Scripture, by informing us who it was that first entered the seat of Paganism to preach salvation in the name of the crucified Redeemer: it does not set aside the Sacred Oracles, but gives us information for which they had prepared us. Chrysostom, in regard to the establishment of religion by Peter in the capital of the empire, observes : “ The fisherman Peter, because he practised virtue, and occupied the imperial city, shines, even after death, brighter than the sun.”‡ Tertullian, at the close of the second century, speaks of those whom Peter baptized in the Tyber.§

You “ remind us, that in the two epistles of St Peter, there is not one word of intimation on the supreme rule and government supposed to be conferred on him.” But it is enough that he writes to his colleagues in the ministry with the dignity and authority that becomes the prince of the Apostles; and such

57 or 58. See Bloomfield, Notes on the Acts and on the Epistle to the Romans: also Macknight on the Epistles. See also Cave, Sæc. Apost.

\* Rom. i. 8.

† V. 13.

‡ S. Joan. Chry. in Ps. 48, p. 370, Tom. I.

§ Tertull. l. de bapt.

is the judgment which an eminent Protestant critic has passed on his style.\* He speaks as one to whom pastors and people were alike entrusted ; and whilst, with the humility which his divine Master inculcated, he regards himself as a fellow-labourer, he prescribes to the dignitaries of the Church the spirit in which they should exercise their power.†

In fine, you ask us, as you delight in interrogatories, “ have we never wondered that the supremacy of Peter has been passed by in all the Epistles and in the Acts of the Apostles ? ” We reply that we have no cause for this supposed wonder, as we see its exercise very distinctly marked in the Acts, and its divine origin strongly declared in the Gospels. Great, indeed, is our astonishment, and deep our regret, that many read these divine writings and perceive not these truths, but prefer vain conjectures and weak reasonings to the plain and solemn words of Jesus Christ. Perhaps, sir, you may not have permitted your attention to be directed to the various passages in the Gospels, in which the Primacy of Peter is indirectly, but significantly intimated. “ Is the Church,” says St Francis de Sales,‡ “ likened unto a house ? It is placed on the foundation of a rock, which is Peter. Will you represent it under the figure of a family ? You behold our Redeemer paying the tribute as its master, and after him comes Peter as his representative. Is the Church a bark ? Peter is its pilot ; and it is our Redeemer who instructs him. Is the doctrine by which we are drawn from the gulf of sin represented by a fisher’s net ? It is Peter who casts it : it is Peter who draws it ; the other disciples lend their aid ; but it is Peter that presents the fishes to our Redeemer. Is the Church represented by an embassy ? Saint Peter is at its head. Do you prefer the figure of a kingdom ? Saint Peter carries its keys. In fine, will you have it shadowed under the symbol of a flock and a fold ? Saint Peter is the shepherd and universal Pastor under Jesus Christ.”

\* Grotius. See *Synops. Crit. Proleg. Ep. 1, Petri.*

† 1 Ep. Peter, c. v.

‡ *Controverses de S. Franc. de Sales, disc. 42.*

## LETTER IV.

### SPURIOUS DOCUMENTS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

FROM the Scriptural proofs of the Primacy of Peter, you proceed to the ancient canons, styled, *of the Apostles*; and you observe, that in them no evidence of it is discoverable. That they are not regarded by us as the true productions of the Apostles, you candidly acknowledge; and hence I can see no reason why you should bring them forward in this investigation, especially as all learned Protestants agree with us in rejecting them.\* Allowing you, however, the privilege of using them, you cannot find a single expression in them which impugns the Primacy of Peter and his successors. The prohibition of the transfer of bishops from one see to another, unless by the judgment and earnest recommendation of many bishops, does not prove that there was then no Primate, because the present discipline requires *his* consent for so important a change; this being a matter entirely dependent on positive enactment. In the first three ages especially, when persecution raged, the communication between the prelates, scattered abroad over the empire, and even beyond its limits, was necessarily difficult; and it cannot be matter of surprise, that recourse to the chief Pastor was enjoined only in cases of vital importance to the general interests of the Church. Besides, the See of Alexandria, founded by Mark, the disciple of Peter, and that of Antioch, founded by Peter himself, had extensive jurisdiction, afterwards deno-

\* See Cave Sæc. Ap. Op. Sup. p. 19. Gen. ed. He thinks that they were collected together chiefly from the usage and regulations of the Church about the end of the second age.

minated patriarchal, according to the beautiful order established from the commencement. The general affairs of these vast districts were committed fully to their authority, as appears by the sixth canon of Nice. If the bishops of the east, whose discipline is thought to be represented by those canons, authorized episcopal translations, whenever judged expedient by many neighbouring bishops, it was an enactment no wise derogatory to the supremacy of Peter's chair. At a later period, the expediency of further restrictions to prevent ambition became manifest, whilst the facilities of communication were increased, and the patriarchal sees having failed, occasion was offered for the more direct and frequent exercise of pontifical authority, even in the most distant provinces. An absolute prohibition of all translations has been made, whereby they became unlawful, except by the dispensation of the general ruler of the Church. The thirty-third canon exhibits that order which is to be maintained in the respective portions of the Christian world; the bishops of each province or nation looking up with reverence to their local head, or metropolitan, as continues to be enjoined even unto this day: but who can thence conclude that there is no common head, whom even metropolitans should reverence and obey? In the enactment of canons, the Councils of the three first ages, which were all local, intended to regulate local concerns, not general discipline; and consequently legislated without the remotest intention to interfere with the general organization of the Church. In this spirit, provincial Councils were to be held twice a year, and local controversies were therein examined and determined: but when the general interests of religion were at stake, their acts were sent to the chief guardian of the divine deposite, as we shall see in the case of Paul of Samosata, and in the celebrated controversies concerning baptism administered by heretics, and the necessity of grace. These frequent Councils were advisable, in consequence of the difficulties for which no legislation had yet provided, and were practicable among neighbouring bishops, whose dioceses were generally small. Such Councils are still prescribed to be held, at least every third year, and, within the last ten years,

they have been thrice held in our ecclesiastical province. Thus our practice is substantially the same as that of the early ages, and neither interferes with the prerogative of the Pope. The judgment of bishops, accused of grievous delinquency, was sometimes left to their colleagues of the province, except the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, whose patriarchal dignity gave them the privilege of being judged by the Pope; but when aggrieved, they raised their voice from the East, and from the West, to the father of bishops, whose power was often exerted in their behalf. The extinction of those patriarchates, and a desire to protect the episcopal dignity from unjust and rash aggression, subsequently induced the reservation of all such cases to the mature examination and impartial judgment of one whose elevation raises him above the partial influences to which other bishops might be exposed.

I have thus offered an explanation of difficulties which have no direct bearing on the subject of our investigation, and which I could have justly passed over without notice, because taken from supposititious documents. Your assertion, that these canons are directly adverse to our doctrine, is surely not easy to be sustained. I hope you now see how perfectly they harmonize with the admission of a governing power, watching over the general interests of religion, and interfering more or less in local concerns, according to peculiar exigencies and circumstances. As to our evading evidence, as you insinuate, it is as far from our thoughts as it is foreign from our practice to seek it in spurious sources.

In your progress among these impure sources, you next come to the "Apostolic Constitutions," which, although confessedly spurious, you bring forward to bear evidence against us, declaring that "you have searched them in vain for any trace of our doctrine on the Primacy." I regret, Right Reverend Sir, that you should have occupied yourself in examining documents of this character, from which no conclusive evidence could, in any case, be derived; but, as I am obliged to follow you in the path you have chosen, I will proceed, although reluctantly, to consider the justness of your conclusions. fr n

what is or is not contained in these unimportant writings. You observe that these Constitutions apply to all bishops, in the plural form, the very language addressed to Peter. This is a mistake. The words which you cite are those which were addressed to all the Apostles.\* No where do you find all the bishops styled the rock on which Christ built his Church. Even from these spurious decrees the pre-eminence of Peter is apparent. They are drawn up chiefly in his name, and he is represented as speaking throughout the most of them. He is named and styled first, as is apparent from the passages which you quote, in the translation of one of which you have rendered this particularity less apparent to the reader. The text should be thus translated: "I therefore the first, Peter say;" which you have rendered: "I therefore Peter say, first."† When Peter and Paul are united in the decree, the precedence of Peter is still maintained: "I Peter, and I Paul, ordain."‡

You have, at last, reached a class of spurious documents which you avow are highly favourable to the claims of the Roman Pontiff, the decretals of Isidore Mercator. You dwell on these with peculiar emphasis, and not only do you charge the forgery of them on Riculphus, bishop of Moguntum, about the year 787, but, at one fell swoop, you make the Popes accomplices of the fraud by their countenance and sanction. The compliment you pay to the Catholic literati of the present day for their honourable rejection of these false decrees, but badly compensates for the wound which you endeavour to inflict on the religion which they have defended, when you represent bishops and Popes as "paltering with every principle of truth, whilst they boasted of infallibility." The facts of the case, however, do not warrant these reproaches. The collection was not certainly framed at Rome, but in Germany: and its author is still problematic, though you unhesitatingly pronounce him to have been a bishop. The literary fraud did not consist

\* Matt. xviii. 18.

† πρωτος εγενητος οντος Πετρος. "Ego igitur primus Petrus dico.

‡ Εγανε Πέτρος και εγανε Παυλος διατασσομενα. Const. l. viii. c. 33.

in forging the documents altogether, with a view to introduce new doctrines, or a new system of ecclesiastical polity, for the calvinist Blondell himself acknowledges that genuine documents were used as the materials of this imposture; whilst false inscriptions and clumsy combinations gave to the collection an air of remote antiquity. It is a curious fact that "the Apostolic Constitutions," which you have read with intense interest, and which you describe as rich in doctrine, in eloquence, and in forms of devotion, have been used freely by the compiler of these false decretals. Large extracts are taken from them, sometimes word for word, sometimes with some slight variation, and given in the name of some Pope of the first three centuries. The Recognitions of Clement, another work of the same spurious character, was also used by Isidore; and even works of undoubted authenticity, such as the writings of Saints Leo and Gregory, were employed in the same manner. You ask: "does not the existence of such a fraud bring a dark cloud upon the very character of the claim itself?" I answer confidently, it does not. As well might an unbeliever argue against the divine character of the Christian religion, because spurious gospels and other literary frauds were circulated at a very early period by some whose zeal was not according to knowledge. If you can speak in raptures of the Apostolic Constitutions, acknowledged by all to be a literary imposture, why are you so vehement in your invectives against the compilation of Isidore, founded in a great measure on these Constitutions, or on works undoubtedly authentic? You say, that this imposture was executed by a bishop; but surely you must know that this is quite uncertain: you add that it was patronised by successive Popes; but you are aware that the usage of three centuries had given the decretals the force of law before the Popes admitted them into the body of laws used in the Roman Church. Nicholas I., in rebuking Hincmar, bishop of Rheims, for having rejected them, assumed, as certain, the fact of their being such as they were represented,—the decrees of the early Pontiffs, whose authority was not dependent on their insertion in the general collection of the canons: but he had not examined, and did not

pronounce, on the alleged fact of their authenticity. If you will take the pains of comparing the decretals with their sources, you will find how very easy it was, at a time when critical inquiry was almost unknown, to be mistaken in regard to a fact of this nature. But there are documents, the authenticity of which is admitted by the most enlightened critics, not excepting those adverse to our faith, which so fully establish the Primacy and its privileges, that I am almost tempted to imitate your language, and tell you that they force a sigh of deep regret over the shame of men who, by ascribing the origin of the pontifical privileges to these false decretals, trifle with every principle of truth, whilst they boast of impartiality. You say that “it is undenied and undeniable that forgeries so extensive were actually palmed upon the churches for many ages, by the successors of Nicholas the 1st.” The decretals of which you speak being presented by their author, presumed to be Benedictus Levita, in connexion with authentic decrees and canons, got credence and currency first in Germany, where they were contrived, afterwards in France, and subsequently in Rome itself, when usage had given them the force of law. They were forgeries, because ascribed to the ancient Popes: but they were for the most part the expression of primitive faith and of the received discipline of the Church. The question of their authorship was a matter of minor importance, when their conformity to primitive tradition was known in regard to the great principles of faith, and the organization of the Church; and their suitableness to existing circumstances in disciplinary regulations was proved by experience. It mattered little whether a decree purporting to be of Pope Fabian contained his sentiments and injunctions, or those of St Leo, St Celsine, or St Gregory, from whose works the compiler borrowed his materials: and the prerogatives of the Apostolic See, as explained by Innocent and Siricius, were equally sacred, as when declared by Evaristus or Alexander. The Popes, who admitted these decretals into the body of canon law, after they had been elsewhere adopted during three centuries, did not study the interests of their See, so much as uniformity of dis-

cipline. The special object of the contriver of the fraud was most probably to shield bishops against their accusers, for to this much of what may be considered original in the decretals is directed. The scheme of imposition was certainly not concocted by the Roman Pontiffs, nor can a shadow of evidence be offered of this injurious assertion. In the progress of this work I shall have occasion to adduce documents of undoubted authenticity, long prior to the ninth century, which gave birth to the false decretals; and I shall prove from them that the Primacy, with great amplitude of prerogative, was acknowledged in all ages. For the present I shall give you one specimen from the false decretals, with reference to the genuine documents which have been copied or imitated. A letter purporting to be of Pope Eusebius, directed to the bishops of Tuscia and Campania, is found in the collection of Isidore. The exordium is with some slight variation a copy of the commencement of the genuine letter of Pope Hormisdas to all the bishops of Spain, written at the beginning of the sixth century: the continuation is borrowed from the letter of John, bishop of Constantinople, to Hormisdas, in which the authority of the Holy See is set forth in the strongest terms. I willingly forego the advantage to be derived from the view of the Papal prerogative given by the pseudo-Eusebius: but is not the loss of two centuries in date amply compensated by the weight of authority derived from the acknowledgment of one who might be considered most likely to question the privileges of the Bishop of ancient Rome? Hear then John of Constantinople, giving an account of his faith to Hormisdas. "The first thing necessary for salvation is to observe the rule of sound faith, and to deviate, in no respect, from the tradition of the Fathers, for the sentence of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be disregarded: 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I shall build my Church.' What was said is proved by the event: for the Catholic religion is always inviolably maintained in the Apostolic See. Being desirous, therefore, not to fall away from this faith, and following in all things the decrees of the Fathers, we anathematize all heresies. Wherefore, following in all

things the Apostolic See, we also preach all things decreed by it: and for that reason I hope that I shall be united with you in the communion of that faith which is proclaimed by the Apostolic See, in which is the entire and perfect solidity of the Christian religion. We promise that hereafter the names of such as are separated from the communion of the Apostolic Church, that is, such as do not in all things harmonize with the Apostolic See, shall not be recited in the celebration of the sacred mysteries."\* Compare this with the false decretal, and say candidly, whether the clumsy contrivance could have been needed to establish the rights of the Apostolic See.†

Candour then will admit that the compilation of Isidore, changed nothing in the principles of the Church, or in the organization of the hierarchy, and induced few, if any, variations in the established discipline, as may be inferred from the very fact of the success of the imposture. In no age can men be so far duped as to surrender, without reluctance, their acknowledged rights to any claimant. As well might an impostor hope to change the principles of common law, by the pretended discovery of Dome-day book, or of the Code of Edgar, or of Edward, as Isidore could expect, even in the ninth century, to effect any essential change in the organization or polity of the Church, by the pretended decretals of the Popes of the first three centuries, which, even if authentic, would have been disregarded as obsolete, had not actual usage sustained them. The belief of the divine institution of the Primacy, so clearly expressed in the Sacred Scriptures, was deeply seated in the minds and hearts of the faithful long before the days of Isidore, as was solemnly declared four centuries before by the Council of Carthage.‡

\* Act. Conc. Hard. Tom. II. 1017.

† Ibid. Tom. I. col. 241.

‡ Ep. 176. olim. 92, p. 622, Tom. II. op. Aug. ed Ven., "arbitramur—  
auctoritati sanctitatis tue de sanctarum scripturarum auctoritate de-  
pomptæ facilius eos esse cessuros" ad Innocent.

## LETTER V.

### APOSTOLIC FATHERS AND IRENÆUS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

FROM the examination of spurious works, we pass to the genuine writings of those venerable men, who, from their close connexion with the Apostles and the Apostolic age, are styled Apostolic Fathers. They claim our respect, from the character of their authors, the station they occupied in the Church, the sanctity of their lives, and their sufferings for religion. You observe, that “nothing positive can be derived from them on the point in question :” yet you seek to make them appear adverse to the Primacy. Thus, you object that, “in one of the epistles of Ignatius, addressed to the Romans, his entire silence on the supposed pre-eminence of their Church, and the derived supremacy of Peter, looks altogether adverse to your claims.” Yet he is not altogether silent. The address of his epistle is strongly expressive of the pre-eminence of the Roman Church. It runs thus : “Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to the Church that has obtained mercy through the magnificence of the most high Father, and of Jesus Christ his only begotten Son ; the Church, beloved and enlightened through his will, who wills all things that are according to the charity of Jesus Christ our God ; which PRESIDES in the place of the Roman region, being worthy of God, most comely, deservedly blessed, most celebrated, properly organized, most chaste, and PRESIDING in charity, having the law of Christ, bearing the name of the Father.” I know not in what more emphatic language the divinely bestowed privileges and pre-eminence of THE CHURCH WHICH PRESIDES could be expressed. ‘The source of its prero-

gatives is also indicated in the body of the letter, in which allusion is made to its foundation by Peter and Paul: "I do not command you, as Peter and Paul: they were Apostles, I am a condemned man; they were free; I have hitherto been a slave."\* Ignatius, who succeeded Evodius in the See of Antioch, notwithstanding the prior foundation of that See by the Apostle Peter, proclaims the presiding character of the Roman Church, and regards it as peculiarly beloved and enlightened by God: and yet to you he appears entirely silent on its pre-eminence!

The letter of Clement, Bishop of Rome, to the Corinthians, is the next document to which you direct our attention. He was a cotemporary of Peter and Paul, and his letter is supposed by some to have been written about the year 90; by others, at an earlier period. It is written in the name of the Church of God, dwelling at Rome, to the Church of God dwelling at Corinth.† The revolt of the Corinthians against their ecclesiastical superiors was the occasion of this "most powerful letter," as Irenæus designates it, which was intended to "recall them to peace, and to renew their faith."‡ The inscription, you observe, is "an humble beginning; for Clement, instead of affecting to rule the Corinthians by his official power, unites with his Church in a fraternal exhortation." But, sir, it was the custom of antiquity to consider affairs of great importance in an assembly of the bishop, with the leading members of the clergy, and the result of the deliberation was given in the name of the whole Church; for, according to Cyprian, "the Church is the people united with the priest, and the flock following its pastor; whence, you should know that the bishop is in the

\* Ὁὐχ ἡς Πίτερος ἡ Παύλος υμῖν διετάσσει; εἰκῆνοι Ἀπόστολοι, οὐ παρατίθεται: εἰκῆνοι εἰσέθησαν, οὐ μέχρις ἡς δελτος.

† "Ecclesia Dei quae incolit Romanum;" παρατίθεται. In the work of Bishop Hopkins it is translated: "worships at." This unimportant mistake would not be noticed but for the severity of the bishop towards other translators. Of all men, he ought to be the most indulgent in this regard.

‡ Irenæus hb. iii. ndv. lñer. c. iii.

Church, and the Church is in the bishop.”\* Notwithstanding that inscription, you yourself, after the early writers, speak of the letter as of Clement. His interference in the local concerns of this distant Church is inexplicable, if his superior authority be not admitted. John the Apostle was still alive, and both from his character and proximity to Corinth, was the most likely to display his zeal on such an occasion, if zeal only, and not the order of Church government, were the moving principle. But Clement makes no mention of his supremacy.—It was not called in question, and therefore it was unnecessary to assert it: he proved it by his interference, and exercised it most effectually by paternal remonstrance, mild rebuke, and sublime instruction. Why, you ask, does he not complain of the disregard of the rights of the Apostolic See, by the violent deposition of the bishop of Corinth without its concurrence? He does complain of the deposition as a violation of the order established by Christ in his Church—the divine law by which the laity are bound to obey those who are set over them. This was their crime; this was the evil to be cured by salutary admonition. The rights of the Holy See had only been indirectly and remotely invaded, inasmuch as that See is the guardian of the order divinely established. Had the discipline then prevailed, whereby the deposition of bishops is reserved to the Pope, still reference to that circumstance would have been unnecessary, because no form of judgment had been observed. The expulsion or deposition of the bishop and clergy was not an act of an inferior tribunal taking cognizance of a cause reserved to a higher power, in which case Clement might have complained of an aggression on his own authority; but it was an act of popular violence, in which the divine law itself had been trampled under foot. Though, then, the letter of Clement makes no mention of his supremacy, it is a precious and splendid evidence of that “solicitude of all the churches” which belonged to his Apostolic office, and of the salutary influence of that authority

\* S. Cyprian, Ep. 69, ad Pupianum, p. 220. Edit. Wirceburg.

which Christ wisely established, to preserve the faith, and restore to peace the discordant members of the Church. The want of such a presiding power is deeply felt in modern sects, who have no remedy for those evils which the passions of men so often inflict on religion, and see their preachers and ministers either obliged to court favour, at the sacrifice of the independence which becomes the ambassador of Christ, or to yield to the violence or intrigue, which the enemies of order and authority are ever ready to employ.

Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, about the middle of the second century, a disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of John the Evangelist, bears splendid evidence of the powerful principality of the Roman Church,—of the high authority of her tradition,—and of the succession of her bishops, from her glorious founders, Peter and Paul. Every effort to explain away his testimony must always prove vain. You admit that “he grants to that Church an important rank.” This admission is important, since we shall see that at so early a period, when her bishops were constant objects of persecution, she could have derived that rank only from her Apostolic founders. Writing against the Gnostics, Irenæus says: “All who wish to see the truth, may see in all the Church the tradition of the Apostles, manifested throughout the whole world: and we can enumerate the bishops who have been ordained by the Apostles and their successors, down to our own time, who taught, or knew no such doctrine as they madly dream of.—But since it would be very tedious to enumerate the succession of all the Churches in this work, by pointing to the tradition of the greatest, and most ancient Church, known to all, founded and established at Rome by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, and to her faith announced to men, coming down to us by the succession of bishops, we confound all those who in any improper manner gather together, either through self-complacency or vain-glory, or through blindness and perverse disposition. For with this Church, on account of the more powerful principality, it is necessary that every Church, that is, the faithful, who are in every

direction, should agree, in which the Apostolic tradition has been always preserved, by those who are in every direction.”\*

Much ingenuity has been exercised to destroy the force of so solemn a testimony. You ask: “Does he not make the establishment of the Church of Rome the joint act of both Peter and Paul, saying, in positive terms, that they set Linus over that Church as its bishop, and not intimating, in the slightest degree, that Peter ever established himself as bishop there?” We grant that both Apostles concurred in its establishment, and the Popes are accustomed in all their solemn acts to unite both, not only as patrons whom they invoke, but likewise as Apostles whose authority they inherit. These holy Apostles acted in concert, without jealousy, labouring for the glory of their common Master, though the prerogative of Peter was special. What regards Linus is thus expressed by Eusebius, in the original words of Irenæus: “The blessed Apostles, having founded and built up the Church, delivered to Linus the ministry of the episcopate.”† You infer hence that Linus was the Bishop of Rome, even in the lifetime of Peter and Paul: but were this the case, how could the succession be counted from the Apostles? Thus Irenæus tells us that on the death of Anæletus, Clement succeeded, “in the third place from the Apostles.”‡ Linus then must not have been Bishop of Rome, until after the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, though he received the episcopal character in their lifetime, and was appointed to be the bishop of that city after their decease, and probably exercised many acts of his order before it, with their assent, and under their direction. There is no reason to suppose that whilst the two Apostles continued in Rome, a bishop was created to govern it with independent authority.

\* S. Irenæus, lib. iii adv. hær. c. iii.

† Θερετιώσαντες οὐν καὶ δικαιομέναντες οἱ μακριποὶ ἀπόστολοι τὴν εκκλησίαν λίγῳ τῷ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς λειτουργεῖταιν ἐνεχέεισαν. Euseb. l. v. hist. c. 6. The Latin version as given in Irenæus is: “Fundantes igitur et instruentes beati apostoli ecclesiam Lino episcopatum administrandæ ecclesiæ tradiderunt.”

‡ τείτω τόπῳ ε' τὸ ταῦ πατούσαν. (lb.)

"With respect to the more powerful principality of which Irenæus speaks, he does not," you say, "use one word which connects the principality with the Church, or with its bishop; but refers simply to its location in that city, which was then, and for many centuries before and after, the acknowledged mistress of the world." For my part, after an attentive examination of the passage, I am perfectly unable to find the least mention whatever of the city, or its imperial greatness, but solely and exclusively of the Church founded by the Apostles. On what ground, then, do you assert, that the more powerful principality designated the civil dominion? Suppose it for a moment, and insert the explanatory words. "By pointing to the tradition of the greatest and most ancient Church, known to all, founded and established at Rome, by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, and to her faith announced to men, coming down to us by the succession of bishops, we confound errorists of every kind: for with this Church (*because the city in which it is situated is the seat of the Roman empire*) every Church must agree."\* Would you admit such a reason? Substitute the words which explain the more powerful principality of spiritual authority, and you will find the reasoning forcible and coherent. By referring to the tradition of the Roman Church founded by the Apostles,—to its faith perpetuated through the regular succession of its bishops, we confound all sectarists, because with this Church (*on account of the supreme authority with which its Bishop is divinely invested*), every other Church must agree."

"*Maximæ et antiquissimæ, et omnibus cognitæ, a gloriosissimis duobus apostolis Petro et Paulo fundatæ et constitutæ ecclesiam eam quam habet ab apostolis traditionem, et annuntiatam hominibus fidem per successiones episcoporum pervenientem usque ad nos indicantes, confundimus omnes eos qui quoque modo, vel per sibi placentia, vel vanam gloriam, vel per cœcitatem et malam sententiam, præterquam oportet colligunt. Ad hanc enim ecclesiam, propter potentiorem principaliatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos qui sunt undique fideles: in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quæ est ab apostolis traditio.*" S. Iren. l. iii. c. iii.

Though you are “not fond of resting any religious question on mere verbal criticism,” you cannot forbear observing that Irenæus does not say: on account of “its” more powerful principality, whence you conceive yourself authorized to infer that he referred to the principality of the city, not of the Church: as if when the relative is omitted, as is frequently done by writers in every language, what is said must be referred, not to what immediately precedes, but to something not before spoken of in any way! Few will be inclined to adopt this canon of interpretation. In the present instance the preposition *propter* determines the relation: for with this Church *on account of* the more powerful principality every Church must agree: just as in the following chapter the Son of God is stated to have submitted to be born of a virgin, *on account of* the most extraordinary love towards his creatures.\* As well might it be said that the love spoken of was not his love, because the relative is wanting, as that, in the other instance, the powerful principality is not the principality of the Church.

You think that the scope of Irenæus, which was to refute the Gnostics, who boasted of wisdom superior to the Apostles, and of secret traditions, will serve to illustrate his meaning. “He had been employed,” you observe, “in refuting the wild absurdities of the Gnostic heretics from the authority of Scripture, and now he desires to put them down by the authority of tradition.” Undoubtedly; but he points to the tradition of the Roman Church especially, because the greatest of all Churches; because with it all the genuine disciples of Christ every where had always harmonized; and consequently its tradition, authoritatively declared by its Bishop, was the solemn attestation of what the Apostles had originally taught.

But you object that the Latin term “convenio,”† used by the translator of Irenæus, cannot be rendered to “agree” without a want of grammatical accuracy, and that the idea conveyed

\* “Qui propter eminentissimam erga figmentum suum dilectionem.” S. Irenæus, l. iii. 4, p. 242. Edit. Col. Agrip. an. 1596.

† “Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam.” Irenæus, supra.

by it would have no connexion with the argument. I refer the reader to the dictionaries, and to the note\* for the meaning of the disputed term. If there were any ambiguity in the phrase, its meaning should be determined by the context, which necessarily expresses agreement, and not resort to the place, as will appear by the paraphrase according to this latter exposition.—“To this Church, on account of the imperial dominion, it is necessary that the whole Church, that is, the faithful from all quarters, should come up.” The greatness of the city might give occasion to some of the faithful to visit Rome, but it never could impose such a necessity on all. Nay, it was a circumstance in most cases unsavourable to their visiting it, because the public authority was there more vigilant, and more hostile to the Christian profession. You forget the times in which Irenæus wrote, when persecution raged at Rome against the Church, and every successor of Peter was a martyr. Was the political pre-eminence of the city likely in such circumstances to attract the clergy and the faithful of all the surrounding churches, to see its lowly and persecuted Bishop? I am astonished at the fanciful conjectures which men seriously put forward to evade the force of a plain and powerful testimony.

The fact which you allege to justify your interpretation of this passage, shall now be considered. During the lifetime of Irenæus considerable excitement was occasioned in the churches of Asia, by an effort to bring them to conformity with the other churches of the world, in the observance of the Paschal festival. They were accustomed to celebrate it

\* Bishop Hopkins is not accurate in stating, that when *convenio* refers to *place*, it is usually followed by the accusative, but when to *sentiment*, as when it means to consent or agree, it generally takes the dative.” The nearest phrases I can find in the classical authors like that of Irenæus, are: “*Convenit optime ad pedem cothurnus*,” and “*convenit ad eum haec contumelia*,” both found in Cicero, the former signifying “the boot fits the foot well,” the latter, “this insult affects him.” It is probable that the translator adhered closely to the Greek idiom. The verb *συναγωγήτε*, to harmonize, is construed sometimes with *πρός* and the accusative.

on the same day as the Jews, whether that was Sunday or not, whilst the general practice was to celebrate it on the Sunday immediately following the vernal equinox. Councils were convened in various places, and the voice of all was unanimous, that uniformity should be insisted on. Irenæus presided over a synod in Gaul, in the name of which a letter was directed to the Asiatic churches. A letter also was sent from the Roman synod, bearing the name of Victor the bishop. Polycrates, at the head of several Asiatic bishops, undertook to justify the peculiar usage of his countrymen, in a letter which he addressed to Victor and to the Church of the Romans. On the receipt of the letter, Victor resolved to separate from the communion of the Universal Church, the discordant churches of Asia and of the neighbouring provinces, whose obstinate adherence to this practice might eventually endanger the integrity of faith by a too close imitation of Judaical observances. With this view he despatched letters to all his colleagues, declaring, or threatening to declare—for the matter is doubtful—the recusant bishops aliens from ecclesiastical communion. To many of the bishops, who before had urged the necessity of uniformity, this severity seemed uncalled for and untimely. On this occasion Irenæus wrote to the Pontiff a respectful remonstrance. He called to his recollection the moderation observed, on the same subject, by his predecessor Anicetus, who having vainly endeavoured to induce Polycarp, when he visited Rome, to abandon the peculiar practice of the Asiatic churches, wisely passed over this difference of usage, and treated his venerable guest with distinguished honour. These are the facts as related by Eusebius in his history.\* I am pleased that you have referred to them by way of illustration. The letter of Polycrates to Victor in justification of the Asiatic practice, shows that he recognised in the Bishop of Rome a special authority; for it does not appear that he deemed it necessary to justify his practice to the other bishops who had addressed him. The measures to which Victor re-

\* Euseb. l. v. c. xxiii. xxiv

sorted, or threatened to resort, prove that he felt himself invested with power even over his colleagues in the episcopacy in the most distant parts, and that he had authority to punish, with the highest ecclesiastical censure, obstinate departure from the general discipline of the Church. The remonstrance of Irenæus does not give the least indication of any *usurpation* of power by Victor, but is grounded solely on the *inexpediency* of exercising it in those circumstances. The example of Anicetus affords a splendid instance of the indulgence and forbearance of the Holy See, in points of a discretionary character, especially where personal merit recommends the advocacy of ancient usage. The unwillingness of Polycarp to relinquish a practice which he believed to have originally had the sanction of the Apostle St John, implies no resistance to the positive injunctions of a Superior, who had wisely confined himself to mere persuasion.

The notion of supremacy which would require the abandonment of ancient national usages at the mere suggestion of the Pontiff, without the least expostulation, or representation of the inconveniences that might thence ensue, is a far more exalted view of it, than is entertained by the most devoted defenders of Papal authority. The Pontiffs themselves have generally—I might say, uniformly, manifested wise and enlarged views in regard to local usages, and have seldom threatened to enforce points of mere discipline by severe censures, unless they perceived some danger to faith likely to result from the want of uniformity.

I agree with you, that the subject of this controversy was of no trifling importance. The practice of celebrating the resurrection of our Lord, on one day of the week rather than another, was indeed in itself indifferent; and the Apostle St John had wisely sanctioned its celebration in Asia on the very day on which the Jews celebrated their passover, in order to facilitate the transition from Judaism to Christianity, in places where the Jews were most numerous. In other portions of the Church, where this motive did not exist, the Sunday was chosen for its celebration, as the very day consecrated by his triumph over

death; and all coincidence with the Jewish observance was avoided, that it might be the more clearly understood, that the Mosaic rites had entirely passed away. As Christianity advanced, the motives for indulgence towards the Jewish converts became fewer and less strong, and that toleration which the Apostles had extended to the ceremonial observances, was no longer necessary or expedient. Anicetus desired to see uniformity prevail throughout the whole Christian Church, but respected the attachment of a venerable man to long established usage. At a later period Victor perceived that the practice was subject to great inconveniences, and not entirely free from the taint of error,\* as some considered it an obligation of the Mosaic law: wherefore he judged that it was time to cut off the refractory adherents to it from the general body of the Church. The entreaties and counsels of Irenæus induced him to relent: but the event showed the wisdom and prudence which influenced Victor, as the *Quartodecimans*, or obstinate observers of this usage, were finally separated from the Church in the general Council of Nice.

You advise us to try the experiment of acting as Polycarp did towards Anicetus. The counsel is needless. Every day bishops from various parts of the world, where usages prevail different in many respects from those most cherished by the Holy See, go to Rome, and are received by the Father of the faithful as brothers, with all the marks of ecclesiastical communion. Their remonstrances, their explanations, their defence of national practices, are heard with patience; and even when the Pontiff earnestly desires and recommends conformity to the general law, he tolerates, with wise indulgence, the discrepancies which he cannot remove without a painful exercise of authority.

In the language of Irenæus, as understood by you, you think that you have found the solution of the mystery with which the question of Roman supremacy is connected. You "do not wonder, that the very fact of this supremacy existing so long,

\* ἐπεροδοξεσσατ. Eusebius, loc. cit.

without any apparent support from the temporal power, should strike our imaginations as being almost conclusive evidence in its favour." My judgment, at least, rests satisfied with the proof. I see thrones totter, and empires fall, where human wisdom and power promised perpetuity : but the "better principality" of the successor of the fisherman survives, though assailed by all the power and malice of this world's potentates. From Nero to Napoleon, what efforts have not been made for the annihilation of this undying sovereignty ! The Pontiffs of the three first centuries were, with scarcely an exception, victims of pagan cruelty ; but, at the end of this fierce conflict, Constantine, as if struck with the superior majesty of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, leaves the imperial city to be the peaceful residence of the humble Silvester. How often, since that time, have not the barbarian and the Christian entered in wrath into that city,—imprisoned or led captive its Bishop, and left him to pine away, or die in foreign dungeons ! And when we see the meek Pius come forth from his cell to be borne in triumph back to his capital, and now behold the humble Gregory, the successor of his office and his virtues, still governing with paternal authority the Universal Church, are we not justified in concluding that this "powerful principality" is different from all governments of human origin ? "Count over," we say to you, with Augustin, "the bishops, from the very See of Peter the Apostle, and see in that list of Fathers the succession of one to the other. This is the rock against which the haughty gates of hell cannot prevail."\*

To account for the human origin of this power, you describe the greatness of Rome "at the time when the Apostles, Peter and Paul, established the Church there;" and you suppose, that in wealth, in numbers, and importance, it must soon have surpassed all others. As great cities influence the whole nation, you infer that the Roman Church must have acquired a "primacy of influence and consequence" over the other Churches. To illustrate this, you represent what would be the probable

\* Aug. Ps. contra partem Donati.

consequence if, at the present day, missionaries to China should succeed in establishing Churches in several of the provinces, and subsequently in the capital, which would naturally absorb all solicitude, and practically become the centre and directing rule of missionary exertion. You would write to these missionaries : “ Be careful about union, and in all your proceedings consult together : but, especially, do nothing without consulting with your brethren of the capital city. In order that the good cause should prosper, it is necessary that you should resort to the Church established there as often as you can ; by reason of its most powerful principality, being the seat of government, and the very heart of the empire, the Church located there is the most important of the whole, and the brethren placed over it should have the chief direction in all your councils.”

Compare your language with that of Irenæus, and see whether it agree.\* Your implied admission, that from the very commencement the Roman Church had a primacy of influence, and the chief direction in the Councils of all the churches, is not without importance. To attribute it, however, to the great influence of the Roman Bishop with the pagan emperors, prætors, and other officers who professed and exercised constant hostility to Christianity, is an hypothesis at variance with the most certain facts of history. The example of that vast empire, controlled and kept in union by a single will, suggested, you suppose, the expediency of giving to the Roman Bishop a controlling power over all Christendom. The primitive Christians reasoned thus, in your opinion : “ Why not secure to the whole Church that order, and subordination, and peace, under a single earthly head, as the Lord’s vicegerent, which heathenism had brought, in the affairs of human government, to such a marvellous system ? Should the hosts of Satan be better marshalled than the hosts of God ? Should one single will be felt and obeyed, to the remotest bounds of that mighty empire, and should not one single Church, which is the spouse of Christ, be much rather the

\* Supra, p. 67.

ruler and mistress through the whole of Christendom ? On such a plan, how much more union might be expected, how much more peace, how much less opportunity for heresy and false doctrine, and how much more glorious would be the victory of the Lord's people, when they should appear to the heathen one mighty host, 'bright as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.' That the best men of the primitive age, being accustomed to have this astonishing empire of the world continually before their eyes, might readily be led to contemplate the desirableness and practicability of a similar system in the Church, and that under this influence of their habitual views they would find in Scriptures analogies, and even precepts, that they would lay hold on our Lord's addresses to Peter, and begin to interpret them in favour of their ecclesiastical empire ;"—these, sir, are suppositions groundless in themselves, injurious to the early professors and teachers of our faith, and far from aiding the cause they had been brought forward to sustain. For thus you virtually admit, that, even in the primitive ages, the Primacy of the Roman Bishop existed : that it implied authority and control, for otherwise it would not have anywise resembled the power of Cæsar ; and that it was sustained by reference to Scriptural texts, though in your opinion it originated in the political pre-eminence of Rome, and in the admiration of the organization of its vast empire. You discover this in "the more powerful principality," mentioned by Irenæus, whilst we, with that primitive age, conceive that principality to be the institution of the wisdom of Him who wished that his Church should be a united kingdom—a compact body : and we discover in its perpetuity the exercise of that power, against which the powers of darkness cannot prevail. How you can still pretend to place the Church of Rome at this day in contrast with the Church of Rome in the primitive age, is to me strange ; for though you may conceive human causes to have given occasion to the assertion of the Primacy, you own that it was then, as it is now, supposed to rest on the addresses of our Lord to Peter. Thus you admit conformity where you had pledged yourself to prove a contrast ; and you substitute a

human origin, of your own imagining, to the divine foundation of the Primacy, which, in common with the Church of the present day, the primitive Church believed. How vain are all the attempts of man to take away from the organization of the Church its divine character ! While Rome was the residence of the Cæsars, God permitted the Church and her Chief Pastor to be constantly assailed by the Roman power ; and he caused the first Christian emperor, shortly after he had come to the knowledge of faith, to remove the seat of empire to Byzantium, so that, in after ages, the privileges of the Roman Bishop might not be thought to have been the gifts of the civil power, or the accidental appendages of his office, derived from the city in which he presided. The secular origin of the Primacy is manifestly disproved, by the hostility to the Christian faith which the civil power exercised whilst Rome was the capital : and by the utter improbability that the memory of its ancient grandeur could have been the foundation of its privileges, after a rival city had arisen, around which was gathered all that imperial munificence and power could collect or bestow. Rome, in the zenith of her glory, was the unrelenting enemy of the cross, and would lend no jewel to adorn the mitre of her Bishop ; in her fallen state, she could add no lustre to his crown.

NOTE.—“An Essay on the Invalidity of Presbyterian Ordination,” by John Esten Cooke, M.D., published at Lexington, Kentucky, in 1829, has come into my hands since this letter went to press. He quotes the testimony of Irenæus, and gives a translation entirely conformable to mine on those points in which I have had occasion to dissent from Bishop Hopkins: “With this Church, on account of its greater pre-eminence, it is necessary that every church should agree.”

## LETTER VI.

TERTULLIAN.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

LEAVING those truly primitive witnesses of the faith once delivered to the saints, who either received it immediately from the Apostles, or were those faithful men to whom the precious deposit of Apostolic tradition was committed by the immediate disciples of the Apostles, we come to Tertullian, a priest of Carthage, who lived at the close of the second and the beginning of the third century of our era. He is adduced by you as a witness, “ adverse to the Primacy,” although, in the very first extract from his writings, which you bring forward to support your position, you have the proof of that Primacy you are so willing to impugn. Contemporary with this writer lived certain sectaries, who asserted that the Apostles did not know all things. This ardent defender of the ancient faith indignantly asks: “ Was any thing hidden from Peter, who was called the rock on which the Church was to be built, and who obtained the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the power of loosing and binding in heaven and on earth ?\* You deny that this passage contains the slightest allusion to the superiority of one Apostle over the other ; although you acknowledge that “ this Father seems to authorize our interpretation of the passages of Scripture. To deprive us of his authority in this point, you wish him to be heard in explanation, and with this view you quote a long passage from his work “ On Chastity,” written,

\* Tert. de Præs. § xxii. “ Latuit aliquid Petrum, ædificandæ Ecclesiæ petram dictum, claves regni cœlorum consecutum, et solvendi et alligandi in cœlis et in terris potestatem ? P. 238, Ed. Lut.

as you acknowledge, after he had become a follower of Montanus. For this eloquent apologist of Christianity, and defender of the Church, was so far influenced by the severity of his disposition as to exclude from pardon those who were guilty of adultery and other grievous crimes, however penitent they might appear. To oppose this rising error, the Bishop of Rome published a decree, by which such sinners were declared admissible to penance and forgiveness. On this occasion Tertullian wrote his work “On Chastity,” in which he says:—“I hear that an edict has been published, and, indeed, a peremptory one: namely, the ‘Bishop of bishops,’ which is equivalent to the ‘Sovereign Pontiff,’\* proclaims: I pardon the sins of adultery and fornication, to such as do penance.” Endeavouring to prove that the power of the keys was given to Peter alone, and was not communicated to his successors, he says:—“now I ask your own sentiment, whence do you claim this power for the Church? If because the Lord said to Peter, ‘on this rock I will build my Church: to thee I have given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, or whatsoever thou shalt bind or loose upon earth, shall be bound or loosed in heaven,’ thou presumest, on that account, that the power of loosing and binding has come down to thee; that is, to *the whole Church allied to Peter*—who art thou that overturnest and changest the manifest intention of the Lord, who conferred this on Peter personally: On *THEE*, he says, I will build my Church, and to *THEE* I will give the keys, not to the Church, and whatsoever *THOU* shalt bind or loose, not what they shall bind or loose.”† Here Tertullian is manifestly with us, as far as regards the rock, which he identifies with Peter, and the power of the keys, which he main-

\* “Pontifex, scilicet, maximus, quod est Episcopus episcorum.” This is an inversion not unusual in Tertullian. The title which the Pope assumed was “Bishop of bishops;” but Tertullian says that it is equivalent to “Sovereign Pontiff,” a title as yet exclusively applied to the pagan high priest. Bishop Hopkins translates it: “the pontiff, namely, the chief, which means the Bishop of bishops!”

t Tertullian, *l. de pudicitia*, p. 715. Edit. Lutetiæ, 1641.

‡ Ibid. p. 763.

tains to have been the exclusive privilege of Peter. He denies, indeed, that this power descended to the successors of Peter, but does not question the succession itself, which he admits, by calling the Bishop of Rome "Apostolic."<sup>\*</sup> His denial of the inheritance of Peter's power of forgiveness by Peter's successor, arose from his attachment to an error, condemned by one of them, and, consequently, loses all weight, since it must be regarded as the rejection of a power by which the error, which Tertullian defended, was proscribed. In the defence of a false principle, it cannot surprise us that he advanced erroneous interpretations of Scripture; and hence his authority, in other respects imposing, *has no weight*, when he becomes an avowed partisan of ascertained error. The partial expositions of Holy Writ, put forward by a writer in such circumstances, will often be found in contradiction with those of the same writer at other times. Thus Tertullian, in his work called "Scorpiace," extends to the Church, through Peter, and even to every member of it who may confess Christ, as he did, what he here explains of Peter, personally and exclusively. "For if," says he, "you still think that heaven is shut, remember that the Lord here left its keys to Peter, and *through him* to the Church."<sup>†</sup>

The following attempt of Tertullian to explain the power of the keys of the personal acts of Peter, shows much ingenuity, vainly employed, to evade the force of the Scriptural proof brought against his error. He maintains, that the event corresponds with his explanation of the promise: "For so even the event teaches. On him the Church was built: that is, through him: he first used the key: see what key: 'Ye men of Israel, hear what I say: Jesus of Nazareth, destined for you by God.' He finally opened the avenue of the celestial kingdom, through Christian baptism, by which the sins before bound

<sup>\*</sup> Tertullian, *l. de pudicitia*, p. 763.

<sup>†</sup> "Nam et si adhuc clausum putas cœlum, memento claves ejus hic Dominum Petro, et per eum Ecclesiæ reliquisse." *Scorpiace*, p. 628. Ed. Lutetiæ, an. 1641.

fast are loosed, and what was not loosed, according to true salvation, are bound fast; and he bound Ananias with the chain of death, and loosed the lame man from his infirmity.”\* I need not labour much to convince you, or the reader, that the cure of the lame man was no exercise whatever of the power of loosing or binding. The key which Peter is said to have given the Jews, by pointing out Jesus of Nazareth, will scarcely be thought to be one of those keys of the kingdom of heaven which Christ promised him. Every one sees that this is an allegorical and forced explanation. The opening of the avenue to heaven by baptism cannot be considered as the exclusive prerogative of Peter, and the mere precedence in its administration does not adequately fulfil the strong and splendid promises of Christ. Peter is not merely a foundation, but a rock, a strong and permanent foundation: the keys given him are those of a kingdom, the emblems of sovereignty: he binds and looses, in a manner peculiar and extraordinary.

Tertullian is more correct in considering the judgment of Peter in the Council of Jerusalem, as an exercise of that authority to bind and loose, which our Lord had given him: “Also,” says he, “in the controversy, whether the law should be observed or not, Peter, first of all, impelled by the Spirit, and having spoken of the call of the nations,† said: ‘Now why do you tempt the Lord by imposing a yoke on the brethren, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? But by the grace of Jesus, we believe that we shall be saved, even as they. This sentence‡ both loosed the things of the law, that were laid aside, and bound those that were retained.’”§ This acute African was too devoted to his favourite error to admit that the

\* L. de pudicitia, p. 743.

† “De nationum vocatione præfatus.” Bishop H. renders it: “foretold the calling of the nations.”

‡ “Hæc sententia.” Bishop H. translates it “opinion;” but an opinion neither looses nor binds: it plainly means here, judgment, decree, sentence.

§ Tertul. de pudic. p. 743.

power to bind and loose extended to the remission of the most grievous sins. His testimony, then, even after he had passed to the sect of Montanus, shows that the passages of Scripture were by him, as well as by the Bishop of Rome, and Catholics in general, understood of Peter; and though he and the sectarians wished to restrict their meaning to Peter personally, the Bishop of Rome claimed, in virtue of them, to be "Bishop of bishops," and to inherit the powers of Peter, and the Catholic world admitted those claims. A modern apologist of the Anglican church has had the ingenuousness to acknowledge, that "in the time of Tertullian, whose life extended into the third century, a considerable advance had plainly been made by the See of Rome, in the claim of the Primacy, inasmuch as he calls the Bishop of that Church the Supreme Pontiff, and distinguishes him with the authoritative title of 'Bishop of bishops.'—'He supposes the rock to mean Peter: but he carefully restricts the character to Peter as an individual; he deems the privilege to be altogether personal; and he flatly denies, that it can be construed as belonging to what then began to be esteemed Peter's Church.'"<sup>\*</sup> You are displeased at this admission; you "leave it to our candour to say, whether Tertullian does not apply these titles rather in irony than in sober allowance;" and you contend that "he had no idea of doing honour to the Bishop of Rome, but the contrary." I freely concede that he used the titles in a spirit of bitterness and sarcasm, because the edict of the Pontiff was directed against his favourite error; but had the Bishop of Rome claimed no superiority over other bishops, there would have been no ground whatever for applying to him these titles. He was acknowledged by Catholics to be "the Bishop of bishops," and Tertullian durst not question his superiority, though in anger he remarks, that such a title is equivalent to the name hitherto applied only to the heathen priest. You say, "every metropolitan bishop who had bishops under him, might be called a chief pontiff, and a bishop of bishops;" but the usage of the Church has not given

\* Faber's Difficulties of Romanism. Note, p. 261. Phil. Ed.

to metropolitans this latter appellation, and the former does not appear to have been given to the Bishop of Rome, except sarcastically by Tertullian : " None of us," says Cyprian, " makes himself bishop of bishops,"\*

We can easily withstand the force of Tertullian's authority as to the restriction of the powers to Peter, when it is granted that he, though at that time a declared adversary of Peter's successor, admitted Peter to be the rock, and that it was also admitted and believed that the Church of Rome was Peter's Church.† Catholics and Montanists agreed on these two points, and the transmission of the power of forgiveness was only called in question because it was exercised with greater lenity than suited the severe disposition of Tertullian. How you can cite him as a witness that the spiritual supremacy of the Church of Rome was not the doctrine of his age, even in the Church of Rome itself, is to me surprising, since he testifies that the Bishop of that Church was Bishop of bishops—that he issued an absolute peremptory decree,‡—that as successor of Peter he claimed the powers granted to this Apostle,—and that the Roman Church was the Church of Peter ! This then was the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and of the Catholic Church generally, whilst the error which denied the transmission of the power was rejected, with Montanism whence it sprung, by the judgment of the Catholic world.

The fact of the succession of the Roman Bishop to Peter, was not denied by Tertullian, even after he had suffered his mind to be bewildered by the vagaries of Montanus. He still called him " Apostolic," and regretted that his authority had been employed against the sect, under the influence, as he alleged, of Praxeas, whereby the peace of the churches of Asia and Phrygia was prevented, which would have been restored

\* Conc. Carthag. de rebapt. p. 339. Operum Cyp. Ed. Bas. 1521.

† " Ad omnem Ecclesiam Petri propinquam." Tertul. ib.

‡ " Audio etiam edictum esse propositum, et quidem peremptorium, Pontifex scilicet maximus, quod est, episcopus episcorum edicit." P. 715.

by the approbation of the prophecies of Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla.\* In earlier and better days Tertullian was the loud assertor of that succession, and boldly challenged sectarians to exhibit any thing bearing a like weight of authority: “Let them then give us the origin of their churches: let them unfold the series of their bishops, coming down from the beginning in succession, so that the first bishop was appointed and preceded by any of the Apostles, or of Apostolic men, provided he persevered in communion with the Apostles. For in this way the Apostolic Churches exhibit their origin, as the Church of Smyrna relates that Polycarp was placed there by John; as the Church of Rome likewise relates that Clement was ordained by Peter; and in like manner the other churches show those who were constituted bishops by the Apostles, and made conservators of the Apostolic seed. Let heretics feign any thing like this!”†

According to your own avowal, Tertullian “admits the application of the term ‘rock’ to Peter;” but you err in stating that in this he differs from the other Fathers, for I shall have occasion to prove to you that it is the general explanation given by these venerable men. His observation that by the knife of stone employed in circumcision we may understand the precepts of Christ by which our hearts are circumcised, “because Christ is proclaimed the rock in many ways and under many figures,”‡ is evidently an allegorical exposition, having no force whatever as an illustration of the text, and not at all weakening his literal interpretation of the rock spoken of by Christ, as the foundation on which he would build his Church. The very passage which you quote from his work against Marcion, is immediately followed by the declaration

\* Tertul. adv. Praxeam sub initium.

† Tert. de præscr. hær. “ Edant ergo originem ecclesiarum suarum: evolvant ordinem episcoporum suorum, ita per successiones ab initio decurrentem, ut primus ille episcopus aliquem ex apostolis—habuerit auctorem et antecessorem.—Sicut Romanorum (*ecclesia*) Clementem a Petro ordinatum—Confingant tale aliquid hæretici.

‡ Tertullian adv. Judæos, p. 218.

that Christ called Peter a rock, choosing to communicate to him his own appellation rather than to use any term not applied to himself. I regret that you have withheld from your readers the following sentence, with which the passage concludes, and which illustrates so clearly the meaning of the author: “Therefore he preferred to give a name to the dearest of his disciples from among the figures which regarded himself, than from those which were not applied to himself.”\* Having asked the question why Simon was designated Peter, he says: “If to express the vigour of his faith, many substances of a solid nature would present a suitable figure derived from their own special quality.” He rejects this reason as unsatisfactory, and asks: “was it because Christ himself was styled both a rock and a stone? since we read that he was placed as a stone of offence and a rock of scandal; to pass over other passages in which the same terms are applied to him.” In this Tertullian acquiesces, and says, that Peter was styled a rock, because Christ was styled a rock, the Lord vouchsafing to communicate peculiarly to this most favoured disciple the name which in a figurative sense was applied to himself, as having a more intimate reference to himself, and being better calculated to express the gifts of Peter, than other figurative expressions borrowed from objects not referred to Christ.† He does not, then,

\* “Itaque affectavit carissimo discipulorum de figuris suis peculiariter nomen communicare, puto propius quam de non suis.” Tertul. adv. Marcion, l. iv. p. 520.

† Ibidem. “Sed et cur Petrum? Si ob vigorem fidei, multæ materiae solidæque nomen de suo accommodarent. An quia et petra, et lapis Christus? Siquidem et legimus positum eum in lapidem offendiculi et in petram scandali. Omitto cætera. Itaque affectavit carissimo discipulorum,” etc. Some curious mistakes are observable in the translation of Bishop Hopkins: “But why Peter? If on account of the vigour of his faith, there are many and solid arguments which would accommodate this name to him?” He ends his version by the words: “I omit other matters,” but the author means: “I omit other passages of Scripture.” The “solidæ materiae” are not solid arguments, but substances such as a pillar, or any other object which might have afforded a figurative expression.

as you conceive, “ leave the question without seeming at all conscious that Peter could be called a stone by reason of the whole Church being built upon him,” for he expressly declares that, were the object of the Redeemer merely to signify the strength of his faith, he could have found many images calculated for that purpose, but he was pleased to communicate his own name peculiarly, that as he himself was called the rock, Peter might be designated a rock likewise:—“ the rock on which the Church was to be built,” as Tertullian elsewhere expresses it:—“ Petrum ædificandæ ecclesiæ petram dictum.”\*

I know not why you have quoted the passage from his “ Exhortation to Chastity,” wherein he argues against second marriages, because one who has been twice married is not eligible to the priesthood. In his anxiety to sustain the error of Montanus, he says that laymen also are priests, that the distinction between the clergy and laity has been established by the Church, and that the laity can baptize and perform other sacerdotal functions, when no priest is to be had. Are these, sir, your sentiments? or have they any thing to do with the question now before us? Again, I beg to remind you, that whatever is advanced in support of an exploded error, carries with it no authority.

When Tertullian, writing against Marcion, asks: “ What key had the doctors of the law, but the interpretation of the law?” he speaks of the Jewish doctors, who in virtue of their office and profession, might be said to have the key of knowledge, but who, nevertheless, as he subjoins, “ neither advanced to understand it, nor suffered others to approach.”† It is surely unwarrantable to apply to a controverted text of Scripture a figurative expression used by an author, two centuries afterwards, without the least reference to the text in question. He speaks of the key of knowledge: “ clavem agnitionis habens :‡” Christ promised to Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

\* Tertullian de præs. hœr.

† Tertul. adv. Marcion, l. iv. p. 549. Ed. Lutetiae, 444, in the edition used by Bishop Hopkins.

‡ Ibid.

The passage, wherein the author says that every confessor of the faith will carry with him the keys of heaven, which “the Lord left to Peter, and through him to the Church,” is one of the numberless instances in which the Fathers, supposing the literal sense as well known, take occasion to recommend virtue by a moral application of the text. Protestant critics, and all conversant with the writings of the Fathers, know, as Gerard remarks, that even “when they stick to the literal sense, they study not so much to determine it with accuracy, as to accommodate the most obvious meaning to their subject, or to apply it to practical purposes in a rhetorical manner.”\* Thus Tertullian says: “Know that the ascent to heaven has been rendered smooth by the footsteps of the Lord, and that its entrance has been thrown open by the power of Christ, and that Christians will meet with no delay, and be subject to no examination at its threshold, since they have not there to be distinguished, but they are merely to be recognised, and are not to be questioned, but admitted: for if you think that heaven is still shut, call to mind that the Lord here left its keys to Peter, and through him to the Church, which keys every one who is here questioned, and who confesses the faith, will bring along with him.”† The author here applies to the confession of the faith and martyrdom, what in its literal and obvious meaning must be understood of power peculiarly granted to Peter, as he himself elsewhere declares.‡ You say that we have in this and other passages “an interesting variety in the idea;” but candour will also force you to avow, that the mystical interpretations, in which this variety is found, must be corrected or explained by those passages of the author in which the literal sense is clearly pointed out. You furnish us with a splendid testimony in favour of the authority of the Roman Church, the depositary of the doctrine and power of Peter: “Come then,” says Tertullian, in the passage which you quote, “you who wish to exercise your curiosity to more

\* Gerard, 669.

† Tertullian Scorpiae, p. 628.

‡ Tertul. l. de pudicitia, p. 743, supra cit.

advantage in the affair of salvation, go through the Apostolic Churches, in which the very chairs of the Apostles continue aloft in their places, in which their very original letters are recited, sounding forth the voice, and representing the countenance of each one. Is Achaia near you? You have Corinth. If you are not far from Macedon, you have Philippi, you have Thessalonica. If you can go to Asia, you have Ephesus. If you are near Italy, you have Rome, whence authority is at hand for us.\* How happy is this Church to which the Apostles poured forth their whole doctrine with their blood! where Peter is assimilated to the Lord in his martyrdom: where Paul is crowned with a death like that of John: where John the Apostle, after he had been dipped in boiling oil without suffering injury, is banished to the island: let us see what *this Church* learned, what she taught, what she professed in her symbol in common with the African churches."\* You say that there is not in this testimony "any thing that looks like the Roman Church having a superior authority!" What, then, is the meaning of the words, that "from thence authority was at hand" for Tertullian and his fellow believers in Africa? Why does he pass rapidly over the other churches founded by the Apostles, preserving still their chairs, and their epistles, and when he has reached the Roman Church pause, exclaim in raptures, how happy is she in possessing the abundant treasure of Apostolic doctrine, and appeal to her tradition, to her teach-

\* "Si autem Italitè adjaces, habes Romam, unde nobis quoque auctoritas præsto est. Ista quam felix ecclesia, cui totam doctrinam apostoli cum sanguine suo profuderunt: ubi Petrus passioni Dominice adæquatur: ubi Paulus Joannis exitu coronatur: ubi apostolus Joannes posteaquam in oleum igneum demersus, nihil passus est, in insulam relegatur: videamus quid didicerit, quid docuerit, cum Africani quoque ecclesiis contesserarit." The translation used or given by Bishop Hopkins is any thing but correct: "where Peter was made *equal to the endurance of the* passion of his Lord, where Paul was crowned (with martyrdom) *at the exile of John*: where the Apostle John was afterwards plunged into boiling oil, and suffering nothing, was banished to an island. Let us see, too, what one might learn, what he might teach, when he should also have compared his symbol with the churches of Africa."

ing, to her solemn profession of faith, in which she was the guide of the African churches, her docile children? Could we say more in her praise? Need we claim for her higher prerogative? She is the Church whose symbol is the great watchword of faith, and with which the African churches harmonize, "because with her, on account of her more powerful principality," as Irenæus has already taught us, "every church must agree."

I shall not interfere with your vindication of Tertullian from the charge of Montanism. The extracts already given show his sentiments on monogamy, the pardon of penitent adulterers, and the prophecies of Montanus, Priscilla and Maximilla. It remains only to advert to his celebrated maxim, which you quote: "What is first, is true; and what is subsequent, is adulterated." Listen now to its application from himself: "Since it is evident, that what is true is first, that what is first is from the beginning, that what is from the beginning is from the Apostles, it also must be equally manifest, that what is held sacred in the Apostolic Churches must have been delivered by the Apostles. Let us see with what milk the Corinthians were fed by Paul; according to what standard the Galatians were reformed; and what instructions were given to the Philippians, Thessalonians, and Ephesians; what also the Romans proclaim in our ears, they to whom Peter and Paul left the Gospel sealed with their blood."\* You may remark, that the appeal to the other churches chiefly regards the Apostolic letters directed to them, whilst the faith of Rome, as loudly proclaimed, is specially referred to; for by its tradition coming down unchanged, by the succession of bishops, from its glorious founders, all errorists and sectarists are confounded.

\* Tertullian, l. iv. adv. Marcionem, p. 505. "Quid etiam Romani de proximo sonent, quibus evangelium et Petrus et Paulus sanguine quoque suo signatum reliquerunt."

## LETTER VII.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

It is a rule of sound criticism, that, where positive documents in proof of any fact exist, the argument which is derived from the silence of some individual should not easily be received. This species of negative argument has no weight but in the absence, or deficiency, of positive proof, and when the silence can in no way be accounted for, except by supposing that the fact had no existence. As we have abundant positive evidence of the Primacy, you might have dispensed with this uncertain and unsatisfactory line of argumentation. You, nevertheless, devote a whole chapter to "the testimony" of Clement of Alexandria, though you avow that "it is purely negative." To you it appears decisive; because, had the Primacy been then admitted, Clement "could not," you say, "have avoided a plain statement of the fact, or, at least, some intelligible allusions to it." It should be recollected, that several of his works, mentioned by the ancients, are no longer extant, so that it cannot be asserted, with certainty, that he did not in any way treat of the Primacy. In his *Hypotypes*, a work which is lost, but of which Eusebius has preserved some fragments, he carefully distinguished Cephas, whom Paul reproved at Antioch, from the Apostle Peter.\* In his *Stromata*, or Miscellanies, which are still extant, he speaks of his instructors, who "guarded with care the genuine tradition of Apostolic doctrine, which, as children from their parents, they had received in un-

\* Eusebius, l. i. hist. c. xii.

interrupted succession from the holy Apostles, Peter, James, John and Paul.”\* The precedence of Peter, so remarkable here, and generally in the Scriptures and Fathers, shows the harmony of Clement on this point with all antiquity. This work, as well as such other of his works as are extant, is chiefly directed to confound the Gentiles, Jews, and pseudo-Gnostics, and to set forth the character of the true Gnostic or Christian. It is not wonderful, therefore, that the organization of the Church should not be developed in them, nor the relative powers of its prelates determined. The passage which you adduce from the seventh book is irrelevant, for nothing is said in it which can warrant any inference against the Primacy. Treating of an objection urged against Christians by Jews and Gentiles, derived from the discordance of Christian sects, he retorted on them, and referred to the divisions which were found in Judaism and paganism.† He afterwards observed, that “we must not, on account of the dissensions, transgress the ecclesiastical rule,”‡ and that those who desire, can find out truth, which is capable of proof and demonstration. This being the case, “the questions must be examined, and from the Scriptures themselves we must learn demonstratively how the heresies have fallen away, and how in truth alone, and in the ancient Church, is most accurate knowledge.”§ On this you remark, that the ancient Church signifies here, as in Irenæus and Tertullian, the Church as it was first planted, without distinction of place, or of one Apostle over another. You know, however, that Irenæus speaks specially and distinctly of the Church, “founded by the most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul;” and that Tertullian likewise makes distinct reference to it. Clement speaks of the same Church, since, in the passage which you have quoted, he says, that it is easy to prove that heretical con-

\* Clemens Alex. l. i. Strom. p. 17.

† Strom. l. vii. § xv. p. 511. Ed. Wirceb.

‡ Ib. p. 513. *ετος και ημες κατα μηδενα τροπον των Εκκλησιαστικον παραβατειν προσηκει κανονα.*

§ Ib. l. vii. p. 755, p. 517. Edit. Wirceb.

venticles are posterior, in point of time, to the Catholic Church,\* from the very fact that the ministry of Paul was consummated under Nero, whilst Basilides broached his heresy only under the elder Antonine,—Glaucias, who was an interpreter of Peter, having been his teacher, and “ Simon *Magus* himself having listened for a time to the preaching of Peter.” The reference to these Apostles especially, rather than to St John, who survived both, shows that the ancient Church, of which Clement treats, is that which was founded by these Apostles, and was guided by their doctrine. The churches of all Christendom were in communion with the Church of Rome, and formed that one ancient and Catholic Church, which was prior to all heresies. “ This being the fact,† it is clear,” continues the author, “ from the most ancient and true Church, that these later heresies, and such as are still more recent, are marked as innovations of spurious origin. From what has been said, I think it manifest that the true Church is one, that which is truly ancient, in which are enrolled those who are just, according to the divine purpose.” The two following sentences are omitted in your quotation, but serve to show how essential unity was deemed by Clement: “ for as there is one God and one Lord, on this account what is highly venerable is praised for unity, being the imitation of the principle which is one. The one Church is, then, associated with the nature of the one Being, which Church heresies endeavour to divide into many.‡ In its essence, therefore, in its conception, in its principle, and, by reason of its excellence,§ we say, that there is one only ancient and Catholic Church, gathering together into the unity of the one faith, according to her own covenants, or rather, according to the one covenant, at different times, by the counsel

\* Strom. l. vii, § xv. p. 539.

† ἀπὸ οὐτας ἵχονται. “ Quæcum ita habeant.” Bishop Hopkins translates it: “ which things if they were so ! ”

‡ τὴ γε τὰ ἴδια φύσις συγχληρεῖται Ἐκκλησίᾳ ἡ μία, ἡνὶ ἵστι πολλὰς κατατεμένους βίαζονται ἀνεργοῖς. Stromat. l. vii. p. 539.

§ κατὰ τὴν ὑπόστασιν, κατὰ τὸ ἰτισίστη, κατὰ τὴν ἀρχήν, κατὰ τὴν ἴδεοντα. P. 533.

of the one God, and through the one Lord, those who are already preordained, whom God predestined, having known, before the foundation of the world, that they would be just. And the eminence of the Church, as well as the principle of its construction, is from unity, surpassing all other things, and having nothing like or equal to it.”\* He adds, that “as the doctrine of all the Apostles was the same, so likewise their tradition.† Though in this long and beautiful passage, the Primacy of Peter is neither asserted nor denied, the unity of the Church is represented so forcibly, that I am glad you quoted it. Of that unity Peter was the guardian; but the mention of this was not so well calculated to convince or confound heretics, as to object to them the notorious fact of their recent origin. The silence of Clement on the supremacy of Peter is therefore easily understood, and perfectly reconcilable with his admission of that doctrine. We often use a similar argument against innovators, as we are sensible that the authority of the Holy See can be effectually employed only against those who already admit it. The very antiquity of a doctrine forms a presumption in its favour, not to be removed, unless by positive evidence of its origin at a period subsequent to the Apostolic age. We say then, with Clement, that the ancient Church is the only true Church, and that the fact of the posterior origin of the sects, is at once the refutation of all their claims. You observe, that “he refers this unity to its substance, its knowledge, its beginning, its excellency, and to the unity of the faith, as handed down to the Apostles.” If you mean to insinuate that he admits any diversity of doctrine, and limits unity to some points of high importance, you mistake his meaning, since he complains of heresies, as violently endeavouring to divide into many parts that Church, whose unity is an emblem of the unity of God. When he says, that it is one in substance, it is, as the Latin interpre-

\* P. 540. *αλλα καὶ οὐ εἴσοχη τῆς ἱκανοτητὸς καθάπερ οὐ σέχη τῆς συστάσεως, κατὰ τὴν μενάδι τοῖς, πάντα τα ἄλλα ὑπερβαλλόντα, καὶ μηδέν ἔχοντα ὄμοιον οὐ τούς έστιν.*

† Ibid.

ter has rendered it, in essence, that is, essentially one. The term gives no ground whatever for understanding it of unity on some particular points. When he adds, that it is one in idea, or conception, he speaks of the idea which we necessarily conceive of it, according to its divine institution. In saying that it is one in its principle, he means God, from whom it emanates, of whose unity it is an imitation.\* It is finally one in excellence, for it far surpasses all human institutions, none of which, whether they be the conventicles of sects, or civil establishments, presents any thing equal, or like this divine institution. “*Con-singant tale aliquid haeretici!*”

Availing yourself of the figure of the key which Clement uses, you assert, that “it is manifest that Clement regards the keys in the sense which Tertullian recognises, namely, the interpretation of Scripture.” I have already shown that Tertullian did not at all speak of the keys of the kingdom of heaven given to Peter, when he used the figure of a key, but spoke of the Jewish doctors, who, not having the key of knowledge, did not interpret the Scripture correctly. Figurative expressions being applicable to an infinite variety of objects, of the most dissimilar nature, it is not at all warrantable to apply to one object what may have been said of another, merely because the same metaphor is applied to both. It is inconsistent with every rule of sound interpretation, to explain the Scriptural texts by passages of the Fathers, having no relation whatever to them, except the accidental employment of a similar metaphor, for purposes widely different. Clement says that, “the Gnostic alone,”—by which term he understands the enlightened Christian,—“who had grown old in the study of the Scriptures, and had preserved the Apostolical and ecclesiastical rule of correct dogmas, lives properly according to the Gospel;”† and he warns his readers, “that we must not imitate the followers of heresy, and

\* “μημνεῖσθαι ἀγκλη τῷ μητρῷ.” P. 532.

† ΤΗΝ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΝΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑΤΙΚΗΝ σάζει ὁ Γροτοποιός ταῦ δογματάρι. P. 534.

adulterate truth, or steal away the rule of the Church;”\* after which he thus introduces the figure to which you have made reference: “those, then, who are imbued with impious principles, and deliver them to others, and who employ the divine words, not properly, but in a perverse manner, neither enter themselves into the kingdom of heaven, nor suffer those whom they deceive to come to the knowledge of the truth. But they themselves not having the key of entrance, but a false key, and, as is usually said, an anti-key, by means of which, not being able to raise up the veil, as we who enter in by means of the tradition of the Lord, they cut down the side door, and clandestinely break through the wall of the Church, passing over the truth, become the initiators of the spirit of the impious.”† Here Clement speaks of divine tradition as the key to the divine Scriptures, for the want of which heretics cannot raise the veil; wherefore they rush forward, trampling under foot revealed truth, and breaking down the wall of Church authority. Who can hence infer, that when Christ promised to Peter the keys of his kingdom, with power of binding and loosing, he meant no more than the tradition by which Scripture might be explained?

No note of distinction among the Apostles, as you observe, is added by Clement in the passage which you quote from the fourth book of the *Stromata*, wherein he speaks of the Apostles: but this is not surprising, for even we, when we have occasion to speak of the Apostles in common, are not accustomed to distinguish Peter from the other members of the Apostolic college. A striking distinction was made by our Redeemer himself, in the text which Clement thus refers to, and which you have passed over in your quotation: “Martyrdom, then, seems to be the purification of sins with glory. The shepherd (*Hermas*) says particularly: “You will escape the fangs of the wild beast, if your heart be pure and faultless; but even the Lord himself says: Satan has sought you, to sift you: but I have

\* εδε μην κλεπτει τον κανονα της Εκκλησιας. P. 536.

† P. 538. μυσαγωγοι της των ασεβων ψυχης.

prayed. The Lord, therefore, alone drank the chalice, for the purification of those men who laid snares for him, and of unbelievers: in imitation of whom the Apostles, as being truly Gnostics and perfect men, suffered for the Churches which they founded.”\* It is manifest that Clement treats of the martyrdom of the Apostles, and not of their official character or relative powers: consequently, there was no reason why he should distinguish Peter from the rest. As to the epithets “good,” “noble,” “divine,” which Clement applies to Paul, they afford no ground for calling the Primacy of Peter in question. Both Apostles might receive these appellations without prejudice to truth, or to the higher prerogative of Peter; and if they happen not to be applied to this Apostle, the circumstance is too trivial to offer even the shadow of an argument.

The writings of Clement, which are extant, contain then nothing whatever against the Primacy, and much in confirmation of the authority of the one ancient, Apostolic, and only true Church. The loss of his other works, especially his *HYPOTYPOSES*, is to be regretted, as, from fragments quoted by Eusebius and John Moschus, we learn, that in them he stated the distinction between Cephas the disciple and Peter, and narrated that Christ baptized Peter alone,† and that Peter baptized Andrew: also that Peter sanctioned the Gospel of Mark, and authorized it to be read in the Churches.‡ Whatever weight may be given to his testimony on these points, it is manifestly favourable to the Primacy.

\* Clemens Alex. Strom. l. iv. § 9, p. 571. Edit. Wirceb. p. 503. Edit. H.

† L. 5. Hypotyp. cit. in prato spir. c. 176.

‡ L. 6. Hypotyp. apud Euseb. l. 2, Hist. Eccl. c. 15.

## LETTER VIII.

ORIGEN.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

WE pass from Clement of Alexandria, one of the most learned of the Fathers, to Origen, the most illustrious of his disciples. You invite our attention to his application of the figure of the keys : "First, then, let us look at a fine application of the figure of the keys, which will prove, in accordance with the other Fathers, how well this term was understood to signify the science of interpretation. On account of its obscurity, says Origen, the whole Scripture, divinely inspired, is like to many chambers within one house, but when the key applied to each chamber is not fitted to it, the keys become scattered through the chambers, not answering to those chambers to which they are applied ; and it is truly a difficult work to find the proper keys, and adapt them to the locks, so that they may open them ; thus it is that the more abstruse Scriptures are to be understood, the argument of our knowledge being taken no otherwise than from the Scriptures themselves, which have dispersed amongst them the reasons of their exposition."\* Those of your readers who may have thought this to be the interpretation of the keys of the kingdom of heaven given to Peter, may be surprised to learn that it has not the remotest connexion with them, and is a similitude borrowed by Origen from a Jew. It is found in the preface to the interpretation of the Psalms, and is preceded by these words : "As we are about to enter on the interpretation of the Psalms, we shall premise an excellent observation

generally on the whole divine Scripture, made to us by a Jew. He said that the whole divinely inspired Scripture, on account of its obscurity, is like to many chambers, &c."\*\* To adduce this similitude to prove that the term of the keys was understood by Origen to signify the science of interpretation, is surely calculated to mislead. Clear texts may be aptly called keys of obscure passages; but the use of such a metaphor, by a Jew, or by a Father of the Church, does not at all imply that the keys of the kingdom of heaven, specially promised to Peter in reward of his faith, mean no more than clear texts, whereby he might arrive at the real meaning of passages which for others would be obscure. If you would substitute the words, "clear texts" for "the keys of the heavenly kingdom" in the passage of St Matthew, you will see the revolting inconsistency of this far-fetched interpretation.

Did I suppose you to have designedly omitted the prefatory portion of the sentence, which so clearly explains its source and determines its meaning, I should smile at the following apology which precedes the next passage: "It will require a very long extract to do it justice, but no labour should be thought too great for the searcher after truth."\*\* Besides perusing long extracts, it is also desirable that the inquirer should consider the customs of the Fathers in general, but especially of Origen, to indulge in mystical interpretations of Sacred Scripture, calculated to edify and animate to virtue, but which neither he, nor the other Fathers, ever wished to have substituted for the literal and obvious meaning of the text. Thus he would easily understand how it was that Origen, in the passage in question, takes occasion from the profession of faith made by Simon, and the appellation of "rock" given him by his divine Master, to observe that if we confess Christ, under the same heavenly influence, we also will be a *Peter*, or rock of faith. In this I discover nothing favourable to your interpretation, for Origen expressly understands the original words of Peter, and identifies *Peter* and *Peter*, which you labour so strenuously to dis-

\* Origen in Psalms, Prof. p. 159, vol. xii. Ed. Wiesbaden.  
• P. 160.

tinguish. “Every disciple of Christ is a rock, of whom they drank who drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and on every such rock the whole ecclesiastical teaching,\* and corresponding government, is built: for in each of the perfect, who have the collection of words, and works, and thoughts, the Church is inwardly built by God.” You see clearly how your author indulges in mysticism, and, with a view to animate all to the imitation of Peter, asserts that every just and perfect man is not only a rock, but that his pious maxims, works and words, form a Church, built on him as a foundation. If you please to follow him thus far, you are welcome to the benefit of his testimony. To prove that others besides Peter could partake of the rewards of his faith, he asks, can it be supposed that the Church is built on Peter in such a manner as to exclude the other Apostles from all participation in the benefits of the Church, or the privileges of the ministry? “If, indeed, you think that the whole Church is built by God upon this one Peter† (*rock*) only, what do you say of John, the son of thunder, or of each of the Apostles? Shall we venture to say that the gates of hell shall not prevail against Peter‡ in particular, but shall prevail against the other Apostles, and against the perfect? Is not what was said previously, verified in regard to all and each one: ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it?’ Are the keys of the kingdom of heaven given by the Lord to Peter alone, and shall no other of the blessed receive them? But if this be common to the others, ‘I shall give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven,’ how should not all the things which go before, and follow after,§ be common likewise? For here it seems to be said to Peter, ‘whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, &c. &c. &c.: but in the Gospel of John, the Saviour, giving the Holy Spirit to the disciples by

\* Ο ἐκκλησίας πας λόγος, καὶ ἡ κατ' αὐτοῦ πολιτεία. Origenes in Matt., Tom. XII. p. 516.

† Εἰ δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς Πέτρου γομίζεις ὑπὸ τῷ θεῷ ὀικοδομεῖται τὴν πασαύ εκκλησίαν μονον. ‡ idem.

§ παντα τα τε προεργαμένα, καὶ τα ἀπιφερομένα. Bishop Hopkins translates it: “those things which precede it, and which are evidently connected with it.”

breathing on them, says: Receive ye the Holy Ghost, &c. &c."\* You are aware, that in asserting the privileges of Peter we do not adopt the exclusive principles which Origen ascribes to those who doubted whether each perfect man, imitating his faith and confession, might be, like him, a rock, and partake of the rewards bestowed on him. We believe him to be the chief foundation placed by the hand of the Divine Architect; but we regard all the Apostles, in a general way, as the foundation on which we are built, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone, as we are taught by St Paul. We do not say that the gates of hell shall prevail against the other Apostles, or the perfect, or the Church at large, when we assert that they cannot prevail against the Rock on which that Church is founded. We do not claim for Peter the power of the keys—of binding and loosing—so exclusively as to deny to the other Apostles the exercise of a similar power, though we maintain that the special address to Peter indicates that he pre-eminently possesses it. When Origen says, the promise that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, is verified in regard to every perfect man,—he is still labouring to prove, by the application of the text, in a mystical sense, that each one may be a rock of faith which no power of hell may overthrow.† He expressly avows that the words, in their literal sense, regard Peter, and are applicable to others only in a spiritual or mystical signification. "If any one say to him: 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;' not taught by flesh and blood, but by the Father who is in heaven; he will obtain‡ what was promised to that Peter, as the letter of the Gospel says, but as

\* Origen in Mat., Tom. XII. p. 516.

† Gerard remarks that "even such of the Fathers as did not wholly neglect the literal sense of Scripture, are fond of allegorizing it, and drawing from it mystical meanings, which are altogether fanciful, and of no use." 670. Inst. Bib. Criticism, p. 203. Origen is the first whom Gerard mentions as indulging in these mystical interpolations.

‡ Τινέται ταῦτα πάντας, ἃς μετὰ τὸ γεγραμμένο τὸ ἱερόν λέγει, πρὸς  
εκεῖνο τὸν Ιησού, καὶ διὰ τὸ πιθανόν αὐτὸν διδάσκει, πρὸς πάντα τὸν γένους  
τοιούτος ὁ Ιησος εἰπειν. Origen, t. xii. p. 512.

its spirit teaches, to every one that becomes such as that Peter was. For all the imitators of Christ are styled from the Rock,—the Spiritual Rock which follows those who are saved, that they may drink from it spiritual drink, and they are styled from the Rock, as Christ: but, as being members of Christ, they have been designated Christians from his name, so from the Rock, Peters.”\* Conformably to his purpose, Origen says, that every perfect man may be styled Peter, from the steadfastness of his faith, and solidity of his virtue, as Christians are so styled from being incorporated in the mystic body of Christ. To show that against such a man the powers of darkness cannot prevail, he proceeds: “Taking occasion from these things, you may say, that they are denominated just, from the justice of Christ, and wise, from the wisdom of Christ; and thus, from his other names, you may form epithets for the saints; and to all such persons would be said by the Saviour what was said: ‘thou art Peter, &c. &c. They shall not prevail against it.’ What does *it* refer to? Is it the rock on which Christ builds the Church, or the Church? or is it the Church and rock, as one and the same thing? for the word is ambiguous. I think the last to be the true meaning: for neither against the rock on which Christ builds the Church, nor against the Church, shall the gates of hell prevail; as it is impossible to find the track of the serpent on the rock, according to what is written in the Book of Proverbs. But if the gates of hell prevail against any one, such a one cannot be the rock on which Christ builds the Church, nor the Church built by Christ on the rock: for the rock is not accessible to the serpent, and is stronger than the gates of hell which struggle against it; so that on account of its strength, the gates of hell cannot prevail against it: and the Church, as the building of Christ, who wisely built it on a rock, is impregnable to hell’s gates, which prevail indeed against every man out of the rock

\* ἔτοι δὲ παρανυμεὶς εἰσὶ της πέτρας οἱ χριστοὶ. Ἀλλὰ καὶ χριστὸς μετὰ  
οὐτοῖς, παρανυμεὶς ἐχρημάτισα χριστικοί, πέτρας δὲ, πέτροι. Origen in  
Matt., Tom. XII. p. 518.

and out of the Church, but cannot effect any thing against it. Seeing, then, that each of the sins which lead to hell, is the gate of hell we shall understand that the soul which has spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, and which, by reason of sin, is neither holy nor spotless, is neither the rock on which Christ builds the Church, nor the Church, nor a part of the Church, which Christ builds upon the rock."\* I have added to the extracts which you have given, this long passage from the works of this Father, that the reader might have a better opportunity than is afforded by the passages you have quoted of knowing his real sentiment. His object was to excite the faithful to imitate Peter, that they might be victorious over the powers of hell. He maintains, that the infernal powers cannot prevail either against the Church, or against the rock of its foundation,—and passing from the letter to the spirit, he concludes that they cannot prevail against any individual firm in faith and unwavering in his attachment to duty. In the same mystic style of interpretation, he regards sin as the avenue or gate of hell, and excludes every sinner from the privileges of the Church and rock. He admits that there is a multitude of men called members of the Church, against whom the gates of hell will prevail, on account of the vices to which they are enslaved. Among sins, he reckons heresies, which he terms gates of hell, that war in vain against the Church. "Thus every author of a perverse sentiment becomes a builder of a gate of hell;—and the co-operators in the doctrine of the author of such things, are ministers and dispensers of the perverse teaching, the source of the impiety. But many and numberless as are the gates of hell, no gate of hell will prevail against the rock, or the Church which Christ builds upon a rock. And truly, each of the heterodox, who brings forth any knowledge, falsely so called, has built a gate of hell. Marcion has erected one, Basilides another, and Valentinus another."† The author here insensibly returns to the literal meaning, and shows that no efforts of heresy can destroy the Church of

\* Origen in Matt., Tom. XII. p. 520.

† Ib. p. 522

Christ, or the rock on which it rests: yet he does not lose sight of the moral application.

You give us a few sentences which follow, and passing over nearly a page, commence your paragraph as if it was an inference drawn by Origen from what you had just recited. I am not disposed to complain of the omission of the intervening passages; but in so important an investigation, it was right to give some indication that the connexion was not immediate; and it was still more necessary to avoid every thing which might convey the false idea of a conclusion drawn from premises. Instead of beginning the paragraph: “We see by all this,\* how it may be said† to Peter, and to every one who is as Peter,” fidelity to the text required that you should have written: “Now (*after these things*) let us see how it was said to Peter, and to every Peter: I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.” You must have observed in the original, that the article is even prefixed to the name of the Apostle, as being by excellence “the rock,” whilst the name without the article is used to denote every perfect man the imitator of his faith.‡ Blending the literal and mystical senses together, or at least giving the mystical interpretation, without losing sight of the literal, he proceeds to explain the force of the words as applicable to the perfect. “In the first place I think, that to the words, ‘the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,’ have been rightly subjoined,§ ‘To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven:’ for he who is defended against the gates of hell, that they may not prevail against him, is worthy to receive from the WORD himself, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; as it were for a reward, because the gates of hell were powerless against him; receiving the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that he may

\* The Latin version given by Bishop Hopkins is different from that which lies before me. Instead of “post hœc videmus,” I read, post hœc videamus. The Greek text shows that my reading is correct. Μετα ταῦτα ἴδεμεν. † πως λελεκται, how it was said.

‡ The definite article is also used in the Syriac, Arabic and Chaldaic versions of the text of Matthew xvi. 16, “thou art the rock.”

§ αὐτολεγθας λελεχθαι, Bishop Hopkins translates it: “First, indeed, I think these words are to be connected with the others.”

open to himself the gates which are shut against such as are overcome by the gates of hell ; and he enters in, as chaste through the gate of chastity opened by the corresponding key, and as just through the gate of justice, opened by the key of justice ; and so of the other virtues.”\*

These mystical explanations may interest and edify the pious, but cannot pass with any enlightened man for the writer’s view of the literal meaning of the passages thus allegorized : nor are they given as such by their ingenious author. Further on he says : “ See what power the rock has on which the Church is built by Christ, and every one has who says : ‘ Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,’ so that his judgments remain firm, God as it were judging in him, so that in the very act of judging, the gates of hell cannot prevail against him.† Therefore, against him who judges unjustly, and who does not bind on earth according to the word of God, nor looses on earth according to his will, the gates of hell prevail ; but that man judges justly against whom the gates of hell do not prevail. For this reason he has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, opening to those that are loosed on earth, that even in heaven they may be loosed and free ; and shutting to those who are bound by his just judgment on earth, that even in heaven they may be bound and condemned. But since those who claim the rank of the Episcopacy use this passage, as Peter, and having received from the Saviour the keys of the kingdom of heaven, teach that the things bound by them, that is, proscribed, are also bound in heaven, and the things that are pardoned by them are also loosed in heaven ; it is to be observed that they speak correctly if they have the quality on account of which it was said to that Peter : ‘ thou art a rock ;’ and if they be such that upon them the Church is built by

\* Origen in Matt., Tom. XII. p. 526.

† “*αὐτες τας κηρυγματικας μυστικας βιβλαις τεττε, ας κηρυγματος ιν αυτω τω θεω, ινα ιν αυτω τω κηρυγματικων μη κατισχυσασιν αυτες πυλαις αδεια.*” P. 528.

Bishop Hopkins renders it : “ that his judgments may remain firm, as of God, justified by him, so that through this judgment the gates of hell may not prevail against him.”

Christ, and that to them it may be referred with propriety. But the gates of hell ought not to prevail against him that would bind and loose. If he himself is bound fast by the cords of his sins, he binds and looses in vain. But as God would not bind the man who is not bound by the cords of sin, so neither would whoever is a Peter bind him. But if any man, not being a Peter, and not having the qualities here specified, thinks that he, like Peter, can bind on earth, so that the things which he binds shall be also bound in heaven ; and thinks that he can loose on earth, so that the things which he looses be loosed in heaven, such a man is proud; not knowing the sense of the Scriptures, and being puffed up with pride, he falls into the snare of the devil.” You perceive that throughout Origen continues in his favourite application of this celebrated passage, but with a distinct reference to its literal meaning: He admires the power possessed by the rock on whom the Church is built; he declares his judgments firm, God as it were judging in him, and the gates of hell being unable to prevail against him in the very act of judgment. All this literally regards Peter, whom by excellence he denominates ὁ Πέτρος “the Peter.” But he extends it to every one who, with the faith and fortitude of Peter, confesses that Christ is the Son of God ; and thus limitations become necessary, which he ventures to apply even to those who occupy the Episcopal chair. If bishops in general should claim for themselves a power of judgment like to that of Peter, their claim, he says, is admissible, provided they also be Peters: but he protests against a capricious exercise of that power, without regard to justice. The principle is true, that no wanton exercise of authority can be defended, merely on the plea of power received, because that power is necessarily to be exercised in conformity with the maxims of sanctity delivered by the Redeemer who communicated it. The ratification promised in heaven cannot extend to what is in manifest opposition with the will and law of the divine King.

Our readers, Right Reverend Sir, will have no reason to complain of the paucity and brevity of our quotations from

Origen, but they will be amply repaid for this trial of their patience, if they acquire a correct idea of his sentiments and views on this important subject. Were I not afraid of appearing to affect your oft repeated and solemn appeals, I would beg of you to divest yourself of every sectarian bias, and judge as a scholar and a critic, of his true meaning. From many errors, somewhat affecting the fidelity of your translation, I fear that you have hastily adopted the version of some writer in whom you have placed unmerited confidence, or that you have made your own version without reference to the original text, or without sufficient attention even to the Latin interpreter. Mine is as literal and as exact as I could make it.

When not moralizing, or indulging in mystic flights, he stated in the simplest but strongest terms what should forever prevent you from bringing him forward as a witness against the Primacy of Peter. "Peter," says he, "on whom the Church of Christ is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, lest one epistle generally admitted."\* In his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, the supreme authority of Peter, as Pastor of the sheep of Christ, is expressly affirmed. Speaking of the excellency of charity, he says: "When the supreme power to feed the sheep was given to Peter, and the Church was founded on him, as on a rock, the declaration of no other virtue is required of him, but of charity."† With these facts and testimonies *as keys*, you may unlock the secret chambers of mysticism, and discover the meaning of those texts, in which, passing by what he regarded as obvious to all, he showed his hearers the edification which they should derive from them.

\* Apud. Euseb. l. vi. c. 25, Hist. Eccl.

† Petro cum summa rerum de pascendis ovibus traderetur, et super ipsum, velut super terram, fundaretur Ecclesia, nullius alterius ab eo virtutis confessio, nisi charitatis exigitur." Origen in Epist. ad Rom. l. v. n. 10. I have rendered on a rock, as I find the testimony quoted by Sardagna *super petram*, and as the Scriptural reference warrants. It is, however, *super terram, on the earth* in the edition now before me. Würzburg, MDCCXCIV. p. 272.

I shall not say a word to weaken the force of your vindication of Origen's memory from the imputation of heterodoxy. For our present purpose it is sufficient that he recognised the Primacy of Peter, and, through respect for the See which this Apostle made the depositary of his power, he earnestly longed to visit that most ancient Church, and gratified his wishes in the days of Pope Zephyrine. To Fabian, his successor, as the chief judge and guardian of faith, he sent the declaration of his faith when his orthodoxy was elsewhere called in question. For both facts Eusebius is my voucher.\*

You conclude your chapter on Origen by a dissertation on his orthodoxy, as if nothing remained for the triumph of your cause but to prove the credibility of your witness. He has, however, testified against you. He has explained invariably of Peter, what you contend should be referred to Christ; and if in his usual style of mystic interpretation he has given a long exhortation to perfection from the motive of obtaining rewards like those of Peter, he has not neglected to inform us that he was explaining, according to the spirit, what according to the letter regards him whom he emphatically styles "the Peter."

\* Euseb. hist. l. vi. c. 14 and 36.

## LETTER IX.

### ST CYPRIAN.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

THE illustrious Bishop of Carthage, St Cyprian, is the next witness brought forward by you against the supremacy of Peter and his successors, although you candidly acknowledge that several passages in his works look very like our doctrine. In a letter to his people, on occasion of the schism of five factious priests who offered the peace and communion of the Church to those who had fallen from the faith in the persecution, he thus animadverts on their conduct :—“ They now offer peace, who themselves have not peace. They promise to bring back and recall to the Church those that are fallen, who themselves have left the Church. There is one God, and one Christ, and one Church, and one Chair founded by the voice of the Lord upon a rock.\* That any other altar should be erected, or a new priesthood established, besides that one altar and one priesthood, is impossible. Whoever gathers elsewhere scattereth. Whatever is devised by human frenzy, in violation of the divine ordinance, is adulterous, impious, sacrilegious.” This truly looks very like our doctrine, and cannot, without great ingenuity, be turned to any other meaning. As you offer no explanation of it, save that which may be deduced from your general view of Cyprian’s sentiments, I leave it in its own

\* *Super petram.* It is so given in the edition of Basle, anno 1521, and in that of Wirceburg. Bishop Hopkins reads *Petrum*, which probably is the correct reading. The sense is the same. St Cypr. ad plebem. ep. p. 59.

simplicity and strength, to the candid consideration of every inquirer after truth, and proceed to your next quotation.

The letter of St Cyprian to the bishop Antonian, was written in consequence of the representations of Novatian having made this bishop waver in his determination to recognise Cornelius as the Bishop of Rome. I will beg leave to give somewhat more copious extracts than you have furnished from this important document. It begins thus : “ I received your first letter, most beloved brother, which firmly maintains the harmony of the priestly college, and the communion of the Catholic Church, inasmuch as you intimate that you hold no communion with Novatian, but that you have followed our counsel and are in harmony with Cornelius our fellow bishop.\* You also wrote that I should forward a copy of the same letter to Cornelius, our colleague, that he might lay aside all anxiety, knowing that YOU COMMUNICATE WITH HIM, THAT IS, WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.”†—This may aid you to understand the full force of some other passages in the sequel. The Bishop of Rome, at that early day, was the centre and bond of Catholic communion : through him the bishops of every part of Christendom communicated with each other, and thereby formed that Episcopal College, of which Cyprian so often speaks,—being one in its character, tendency and spirit. On hearing that Antonian had subsequently suffered himself to be moved by the representations of Novatian, who calumniated both Cornelius and Cyprian, the saint resolved to undeceive him, and to lay before him all the facts that were calculated to recall him to Catholic unity. As to Cyprian’s own conduct in regard to the fallen, he observes, that during the vacancy of the Roman See, he had communicated his views to the clergy of that Church, who wrote to him a letter approving of his determination : “ This

\* “ Three bishops, who ordained Novatian, the schismatic bishop, were deposed, and others ordained to succeed them by Cornelius, Bishop of Rome, whose proceedings in this matter were generally approved all over the world.” Archbishop Potter on Church Government, p. 392.

† St Cyprian, Ep. ad Antonian, p. 109.

letter (he observes) was despatched throughout the whole world, and brought to the knowledge of all the churches and all the brethren." This extraordinary importance attached to the *provisional government* of that Church, if I may be allowed so to designate it, shows the authority which ordinarily belonged to it, and the extent of its jurisdiction. After peace had succeeded the persecution, and an opportunity was afforded of assembling the bishops of Africa, as Cyprian had purposed, and the Roman clergy had approved, the Council was held, and measures were adopted in which severity and indulgence were blended. Though the number of bishops assembled was great,\* still they deemed it right to communicate their judgment to the Roman Pontiff, that it might be strengthened by his superior authority. With the deliberation and wisdom which have always characterized the acts of the Holy See, Cornelius assembled a number of bishops, and declared his concurrence in the measures of the African prelates. "If the number of bishops in Africa (says Cyprian to Antonian) appear insufficient, we wrote even to Rome on this point to Cornelius, our colleague; who also, himself, having held a council with many bishops, consented to the same decree as we had made, with equal severity and salutary moderation."<sup>†</sup>

Having thus vindicated himself, he proceeds to the case of Cornelius: "I come now, most beloved brother, to the person of Cornelius, our colleague, that you may know him truly, as we do, and not from the false statements of malignant slanderers, but according to the judgment of the Lord God, who made him Bishop, and by the testimony of his fellow-bishops, the entire number of whom, throughout the whole world, has

\* Copiosus episcoporum numerus.

† "Cyprian and the council of bishops, of which he was president, in their epistle to two churches of Spain, whose bishops had lapsed into idolatry, tells them, that both they themselves, and all other bishops in the whole world, and PARTICULARLY CORNELIUS, BISHOP OF ROME, had decreed that lapsers should be admitted to penitence, but not allowed to continue among the clergy." Archbishop Potter on Church Government, p. 342, referring to Cyprian, Ep. 67, p. 291.

assented with perfect unanimity.”—It appears, then, that the whole body of bishops considered the Bishop of Rome as one in whose election all were interested; and their communion with him followed from a knowledge of the fact of his being lawfully promoted.—“ He was made Bishop by many of our colleagues, who were at that time in the city of Rome, who sent to us, on his ordination, honourable and laudatory letters, distinguished for the testimony which they bore to his merit.\* And Cornelius was made Bishop according to the judgment of God, and of his Christ, according to the testimony of almost all the clergy, with the suffrage of the people who were present on the occasion, and he was selected from the college of aged priests and good men; when no one had been appointed before him, and the place of Fabian, that is, the place of Peter, and the dignity of the priestly chair was vacant: which place being occupied according to the will of God, and being strengthened by the consent of us all, whoever now seeks to be made bishop must necessarily be *without*, nor can he have ecclesiastical ordination who does not hold the unity of the Church. Whoever he be, though he vaunt himself and put forward great claims, he is a profane man, a stranger, he is *without*. And since after the first there can be no second, whosoever was made (*bishop*) after the one who alone should be such, is not the second, but he is no bishop. Finally, having received the Episcopal office, which he did not ambition, or seize on, but in conformity to the will of God who makes priests, how great was his virtue in the Episcopacy which he had received! how great his fortitude! how firm his faith! (which we should intimately regard and praise in simplicity of heart) to have sat intrepid in the sacerdotal chair at Rome, at a time when the hostile tyrant menaced the priests of God with dire punishments, and would hear with greater patience and forbearance that a rival prince had risen against him, than that a priest of God was established at Rome.”

\* “Testimonio suæ prædicationis illustres de ejus ordinatione miserunt.” The version of Bishop Hopkins is not accurate. The letters were to certify his ordination, and they were full of his praise. *Prædictio* does not here mean *preaching*.

This illustrious testimony to the pre-eminence of the Roman Church, as the chair of Peter, forces from you the admission : "That the Church of Rome was the seat of Peter, Cyprian doubtless believed ; and, therefore, he attaches the same importance to it that he attaches to Peter in relation to the other Apostles." You add, "all this amounted to no more than what belongs to the foreman of a jury, the senior judge upon the bench, the precedence among peers, or any other case in which a number being united in the same work with the same powers, one for the sake of order goes before the rest." Pray, sir, does not the illustrious martyr say, that to communicate with the Roman Bishop is to communicate with the Catholic Church ; that it is impossible for any altar to be erected, or priesthood, or chair to subsist, separated from that chair "sound-ed by the voice of the Lord upon Peter ?" Was not the pre-eminence and power of that Bishop so notorious, that a persecuting emperor regretted more his election than the rise of a rival, and a foe ?

Antonian had requested to be informed what heresy Novatian had introduced. Cyprian replied, it was a matter of no consequence, as long as he was separated from the Church by his opposition to its lawful Bishop : "As to what regards the person of Novatian, concerning whom you have requested that I should inform you what heresy he has introduced, know, in the first place, that we should not be curious to know what he teaches, since he teaches WITHOUT. *Whoever he is, and whatever qualifications he possesses, he is not a Christian who is not in the Church of Christ.*" I believe, sir, you will find no advocate of the Papal authority insist on the necessity of communion with the Apostolic See, in terms stronger than these. From this epistle, nevertheless, you have brought forward an objection which will be best refuted by presenting it in connexion with the context of the place whence it is taken. Immediately after the words just quoted, Cyprian continues : "Though he boast of his philosophy, or proclaim his eloquence in haughty words, he who has maintained neither fraternal charity nor ecclesiastic-

tical unity, has lost what he had been before. Unless he appears to you to be a bishop, who after a bishop had been made in the Church by sixteen bishops, endeavours through ambition to be made by deserters, an adulterer and a stranger, and whilst there is one Church divided by Christ into many members throughout the whole world, and one Episcopacy spread abroad through the concordant multitude of bishops, he, contrary to the tradition of God, contrary to the unity of the Catholic Church, connected and joined together everywhere, endeavours to make a human church, and sends his new apostles through many cities, to lay some foundations of his new institution ; and whilst long since, throughout all the provinces, and in every city, bishops have been ordained,—advanced in age, sound in faith, tried in times of oppression, proscribed in persecution,—he dares create pseudo-bishops in their stead.” You may not have had the whole text under your eye when you argued that there is no superior authority in the Bishop of Rome above his colleagues, because the Episcopate is one : for surely whoever reads the text must manifestly see that the saint is not labouring to establish the equality of all bishops, but their union for one great purpose—the government of the Church ; whence he concludes that the refractory intruder, Novatian, by his opposition to Cornelius, was cut off from the communion of all bishops, and of the Church. He does not, in this passage, undertake to explain their relative powers, but he has already stated the high authority of the Bishop of Rome.

There is one other passage in this letter which, though not objected by you, I shall explain, as it may serve to illustrate other places. “In the time of our predecessors,” says he, “some of the bishops here, in our province, thought that peace should not be given to adulterers, and totally shut the avenue of penance against adultery ; but they did not, however, withdraw from the college of their fellow-bishops, or break the unity of the Catholic Church by obstinate severity or censure, so as that because peace was given to adulterers by some, whosoever did not give it should be separated from the Church.

Whilst the bond of concord remains, and the indivisible mystery\* of the Catholic Church continues, each bishop disposes and directs his conduct, being to render to the Lord an account of his determination." The saint speaks of a matter of discipline,—on which no general law had been passed, and with regard to which each bishop consequently had a discretionary power. In matters that interfere not with the integrity of faith, and that are not determined by any general law,—the bond of concord being thus maintained, the mysterious unity of the Catholic Church, which is in Christ, being inviolate—each bishop governs and legislates for the portion of the flock committed to his charge. This nowise excludes the vigilance and control of the Chief Bishop, for subordination to him appertains to that bond of concord which must remain firm and unbroken; yet his power is rarely interposed, except to maintain faith in its integrity, or to urge the observance of the general laws of the Church.

Further on you cite a very strong passage from the letter of St Cyprian to Cornelius, regarding Fortunatus and Felicissimus. At the risk of being tedious, I shall venture to give the substance of the letter, with some further extracts from it. It was written after the saint had received a letter from Cornelius, full of brotherly love, zeal for ecclesiastical discipline, and sacerdotal judgment.† In it Cornelius had informed him that Felicissimus, a schismatical priest, who had been degraded for misconduct, by Cyprian and the African prelates, having come to Rome, was driven from the Church by the orders of Cornelius. In another letter, which accompanied the former, Cornelius communicated to him the apprehensions he entertained in regard to the probable violence of the schismatic and his abettors. Cyprian remonstrates with him on these fears, as unworthy the high office which he held. "If, beloved brother, the audacity

\* *Perseverante Catholicæ Ecclesiæ individuo Sacramento.*" It might be rendered with more propriety, though not so literally, "the sacred and indivisible unity of the Catholic Church." P. 116, Ep. ad Anton.

† "Sacerdotalis censuræ." St Cyprian ad Cornel. p. 6.

of the wicked must be feared, and if they accomplish by rash and desperate means what they cannot do justly and righteously, the vigour of the Episcopacy is lost, and the sublime and divine power of governing the Church is no more, nor can we any longer continue, or be Christians, if we have come to such a state as that we must fear the threats and snares of abandoned men.....The immovable strength of faith ought to abide with us, beloved brother, and permanent and unshaken virtue ought to oppose all attacks, and break the violence of the roaring surges, as with the strength and mass of a rock lying in their way.” He proceeds to observe, that we must not regard the source of the danger; and he expatiates on the crime of calumniating the priests of God, adducing to this end the example of the punishment awarded in the Mosaic law against whosoever should contemn the sentence of the high priest. “ How can they escape the judgment of an avenging Lord, who do such things not only to their brethren, but to the priests, to whom such great honour is granted through the divine condescension, that whoever would not obey the priest of God, the judge for the time being, should be immediately put to death. In Deuteronomy, the Lord God says: ‘ he that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest, or judge, whosoever shall be in those days, that man shall die ; and all the people hearing it shall fear, and they shall not afterwards act impiously.’ ” Having quoted some other passages of Scripture, he draws this conclusion : “ Since these weighty and numerous examples, with many others, exist, whereby the priestly authority and power, through divine concession, is established, what think you of those, who, being the enemies of the priests, and rebels against the Catholic Church, are not awed, either by the threat of the Lord who forewarns, or by the avenging judgment that awaits them ? For from no other source have heresies arisen, or schisms sprung up, than from not obeying the priest of God, and not reflecting that there is one priest, for the time, in the Church, and one judge, for the time in the place of Christ, to whom, if all the brotherhood yielded obe-

dience according to the divine instructions, no one would attempt any thing against the college of priests: no one, after the divine judgment, after the suffrage of the people, after the consent of his fellow bishops, would make himself judge, not of the bishop, but of God; no one would rend the Church of Christ by the breach of unity; no one, through vanity and pride, would form a new heresy apart and without."\* He proceeds to show that the appointment of the Priest of God is made in the Church, under the special direction of divine providence, whilst out of the Church it is otherwise; and he applies this observation specially and distinctly to the Bishop of Rome, Cornelius, whose virtues he sets forth, dwelling especially on the rage of the persecutors against him:—"I speak under provocation—I speak reluctantly—I am constrained to say it: when a bishop is substituted in the place of the deceased; when he is chosen in peace with the suffrage of the whole people; when he is protected in persecution by the aid of God; being united faithfully with all his colleagues; already, during years of his Episcopacy, pleasing to his people; promoting discipline in time of tranquillity; proscribed in stormy times; so often called for, the name of his Episcopacy being specified and added, that he might be delivered over to the lion; honoured with the testimony of divine condescension in the circus and in the amphitheatre:—at the very time at which I wrote to you, demanded anew in the circus by the shouts of the multitude: '*To the Lion,*' on account of the sacrifices which the people were ordered by an edict to celebrate:—when such a man, beloved brother, is assailed by some desperate and abandoned men, who are out of the Church, it is manifest by whom he is attacked; not truly by Christ, who either establishes or protects the priests, but by him who being the adversary of

\* Neque enim aliunde hæreses obortæ sunt, aut nata sunt schismata quam inde quod sacerdoti Dei non obtemperatur: nec unus in Ecclesia ad tempus Sacerdos et ad tempus judex vice Christi cogitatur: cui si secundum magisteria divina obtemperaret fraternitas universa, nemo adversum Sacredotum collegium quidquam moveret." P. 8.

Christ, and enemy of his Church, persecutes with his malice Him who is set over the Church;\* that the pilot being removed, he may more fiercely and violently proceed to effect the shipwreck of the Church." If these last words do not convince an impartial mind that Cyprian regarded the Bishop of Rome as the ruler of the Universal Church, the one priest and judge who for the time is in the place of Christ, and whom all the brethren should obey, conformable to the divine mandate, I am wholly unacquainted with the power of words. Let us, however, proceed.

Cyprian remarks, that we should not be surprised at the defection and revolt of some against the priests and Church of God, since the Lord and his Apostles had foretold that such things would come to pass; and he himself, notwithstanding the splendour of his miracles, had been forsaken by some weak disciples. "And yet," says he, "he did not rebuke them as they went away, or grievously threaten them; but rather, turning towards his Apostles, he said: 'Will you also go away?' Peter, however, on whom the Church was built by the same Lord, speaking, one for all, and answering in the name of the Church, says: 'Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the word of eternal life; and we believe and have known that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;' signifying thereby, and showing, that those who depart from Christ, perish by their own fault; but that the Church which believes in Christ, and retains what it has once known, never by any means departs from Christ; and that they are the Church who continue in the house of God."

Cornelius having complained of not having received immediate and full information, in regard to the proceedings of the schismatics, Cyprian answers: "I did not deem it necessary to report to you speedily and pressingly the artifices of heretics; for the contrivances of heretical and schismatical audacity ought not to interest the majesty and dignity of the Church."

\* "St Cyprian Ep. Corn. p. 9. Edit. Basil. "Ob hoc Ecclesiæ præpositum sua infestatione persecutur, ut gubernatore sublato, atrocius atque violentius circa ecclesiæ naufragia grassetur."

He adds, that he had lately sent him a list of all the orthodox bishops of Africa. He goes on to relate the proceedings of the schismatics in regard to the making of Fortunatus bishop, and then going to Rome with a ‘cargo’ of falsehoods ; and dwells at length on their facility in admitting to communion, without penance, those who had fallen in persecution.\*—“ In addition to these things, having obtained for themselves a false bishop, ordained by heretics, they venture to set sail, and carry letters from schismatical and profane men to the chair of Peter, and to the principal† Church, whence sacerdotal unity has arisen : nor do they reflect that they are Romans, whose faith is extolled by the Apostle, to whom perfidy can have no access.” From this it is manifest that the schismatics themselves looked up to Rome as the great and ruling Church, and sought by every art to enlist its authority in their favour: whilst Cyprian cherished a well grounded confidence that all their efforts would prove vain ; and regarded their insidious attempt on the faith of the chair of Peter as the height of audacity. The words which immediately follow, express the unwillingness of St Cyprian and the African bishops, that priests condemned by their authority, should have recourse to Rome, which could not be so fully informed of their offences as those who were on the spot.

“ What cause had they to come (*to Rome*) and announce the false bishop *who was created* against the other bishops ? For they are either pleased with what they did, and persevere in their wickedness ; or, if they are sorry, and abandon it, they know whither they can return. For since it was determined by us all, and is equally just and proper, that the cause of every one should be tried where the crime was committed ; and since to each of the pastors a portion of the flock is given, which each one may rule and govern, being to render an account of his conduct to the Lord : it is certainly meet, that those over

\* The translation of Bishop Hopkins is somewhat inaccurate in the commencement.

† “ *Cathedra principalis*;” it properly means the princely or ruling Church, and corresponds admirably to the “ *potiorem principalitatem*” of Irenæus.

whom we preside should not run about, and by their crafty and fallacious temerity disturb the perfect concord of bishops ; but that they should plead their cause, where they can have both the accusers and witnesses of their crime, unless a few desperate and abandoned men undervalue the authority of the bishops of Africa, who have already passed judgment on them, and have recently, by the weight of their sentence, condemned their conscience, bound with many chains of sins. Already has their cause been tried ;—already has the sentence been passed : nor is it suitable for the judgment of priests to be reproved with the levity of a fickle and inconstant mind.”\*

To one eager to find a pretext for calling in question the Primacy, the foregoing passage may, perhaps, appear sufficient ; but to the lover of truth, to the man who considers it in connexion with the whole letter, it does not offer any ground for doubt. Felicissimus had gone to Rome with the letter of the pseudo-bishop Fortunatus, and had attempted to intrude into the Church, as if entitled to all the privileges of ecclesiastical communion. Foiled in this effort, he made such representations as might induce Cornelius to doubt of the justice of the sentence pronounced against him by the African bishops. Cornelius wrote to Cyprian, primate of Carthage, to know the facts. Cyprian states them at length, and does not question the right of Cornelius to inquire into the case, or even to revoke the sentence ; but he strongly urges the inexpediency of receiving such appeals from refractory priests, the cognizance of whose cause could best take place where their delinquency had occurred. This was also the view of his colleagues, and it continued to be respectfully urged on the attention of the successors of Cornelius, down to the days of Pope Zosimus. The abstract right of receiving such appeals was not called in question ; the right of aggrieved bishops to appeal to the chief Bishop, was exercised and admitted : but to extend this privilege to all priests seemed, to the African prelates, likely to open a door to clerical impunity, and to lead to the contempt of the Episcopal authority.

\* S. Cypr. ad Corn.

When Cyprian says, that to each Bishop is committed a portion of the flock to rule and govern, with responsibility to God, he does not assert the independence of each bishop from every other bishop in that government; otherwise there could not exist the harmony and unity of the Episcopal College, on which he loves to dwell: but he alleges the responsibility of each bishop to God, to show that in the exercise of his authority over his clergy and flock, he was not likely to act unjustly.

In reply to a complaint of Cornelius, that some letters from the province of Hadrumetum had been directed to the priests and deacons of Rome, rather than to the Pontiff himself, he states the prudential motives which had induced this temporary measure, but assures him that “he had exhorted all who sailed from Africa to Rome, to acknowledge and hold fast the root and parent of the Catholic Church.\* This surely ‘looks very like our doctrine.’

In a letter of St Cyprian to Stephen, the successor of Cornelius, he informs him of intelligence which had reached him concerning Marcian, bishop of Arles, who, adopting the severity of Novatian, refused reconciliation and communion to those who had fallen in persecution, however penitent they afterwards appeared. Far from regarding this as a matter in which each bishop might rest on his own authority, and decline all responsibility, Cyprian earnestly urges Stephen to cut off Marcian, without delay, from the communion of the Church. The bishop of Lyons, and other bishops of the province, had addressed Stephen, informing him of the facts of the case; and Cyprian writes to stimulate his zeal to adopt prompt and decisive measures. “Let letters,” he says, “be directed by you to the province and to the people of Arles; in virtue of which, Marcian being deposed, another may be substituted in his place, and the flock of Christ, which is now despised, having been scattered and wounded by him, may be gathered toge-

\* “*Scimus nos hortatos eos esse ut Ecclesiam Catholice radicem et matricem agnoscerent ac tenerent.*” Epist. 44. Cornelio, p. 104. Edit. Wirceburgi. Edit. Basil. ab Erasmo, p. 164. an. MDXXI.

ther.”\* This exercise of authority, which the bishops of the province did not attempt, was implored by Cyprian, who certainly could not have solicited it, had he thought each bishop to be irresponsible, or the Roman Bishop to be no more than the ‘foreman of a jury!’ He concludes by asking the earliest information of the action of Stephen, and its results. “Intimate to us plainly, who shall have been substituted at Arles in place of Marcian, that we may know to whom we should direct our brethren, and to whom we should write.” He mentions elsewhere the fact of Basilides, a deposed bishop, who “going to Rome, deceived our colleague Stephen far distant and ignorant of the fact and truth, ambitioning to be unjustly replaced in the bishopric from which he had been justly deposed.” Instead of reprobating this act as an usurpation of authority on the part of Stephen, he only expresses his indignation at the deception practised on him. “For he who was inadvertently deceived, is not so much to be blamed, as he is to be execrated, who fraudulently deceived him.”†

As you quote from the admirable work on the unity of the Church, in which Cyprian affirms the unity of the Episcopate, and the distribution of its powers amongst many; I shall cite some passages from the same work, which will show that the saint merely maintained thereby the unity of Church government, by the concurrence of all bishops, each in his place, to the one great object, and the exercise of their powers in strict and close communion with the Apostolic chair of Peter—“The Lord says to Peter: ‘I say to thee that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed in heaven.’ And after his resurrection he says to him: ‘Feed my sheep;’ and although after his resurrection he gives to all the Apostles equal power, and says: ‘As

\* S. Cyprian. Stephano, l. 3, 13, Ep. p. 90. Edit. Basil.

† L. 1. Epist. 4. Edit. Basil, p. 10. Felici Presb.

the Father hath sent me, I also send you. Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: whose sins you shall retain, they are retained:' yet to manifest unity, he ordained, by his authority, the origin of the same unity, beginning from one. Even the other Apostles were certainly the same as Peter, admitted to the equal participation of honour and power; but the commencement arises from unity, that the Church may be shown to be one."\*\* It is clear that the saint, in asserting the equality of the Apostolic mission and power, in regard to the forgiveness of sin, and other acts of their ministry, always understands that Peter was constituted the head of the rest, and vested with a power by which unity could be maintained.

The passage which you quote from the letter to "The Fallen," harmonizes perfectly with the others, in which the Primacy of Peter is declared. Some of the unhappy persons who in the persecution had sacrificed to idols, and thus fallen from the faith, addressed Cyprian a letter in the name of the Church, as if they constituted the Church. The holy Bishop commences his reply by showing them, from the words of our Lord to Peter, that the pastor, with his clergy and flock, are the Church; and that this name cannot be usurped by a band of deserters from its faith.—" Our Lord, whose precepts and admonitions,† we ought to observe; establishing the honour of the bishop, and the system of his Church, speaks in the Gospel, and says to Peter: 'I say to thee, that thou art Peter; and on this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not overcome it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.' Thence by the flux of times and successions, the ordination of bishops and

\* Edit. Wirceburgi, p. 349. In this last edition the text reads: "Primatus Petro datur ut una Christi ecclesia, et cathedra una monstretur." I have not followed this reading, as it is wanting in some manuscripts.

† "Præcepta et monita;" Bishop Hopkins reads "præcepta metuere."

the system of the Church runs along ; so that the Church is established upon the bishops, and every act of the Church is governed by the same presidents. Since, therefore, this is established by the divine law, I am surprised that some, with audacious temerity, have ventured to write to me in the name of the Church, while the Church consists of the bishop, clergy, and all the hearers.”\*

When, then, he says that the Episcopate is one, far from denying the superior power of Peter and his successors, he necessarily presupposes it; for the multitude of bishops could not be preserved in this essential unity, except by some controlling power ; and he himself has taught us that it was lodged in Peter, since from him unity began. The harmony of the Episcopal body, and not their equality in every respect, is only asserted by him : “ Does he who opposes and resists the Church, flatter himself that he is in the Church ? † whilst the blessed Paul the Apostle teaches this, and shows the mystery of unity, saying, one body and one spirit ; one hope of your calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism ; one God. Which unity ought to be firmly held and maintained, especially by us bishops who preside in the Church, that we may prove that the Episcopate itself is one and indivisible. Let no one deceive the brotherhood by falsehood : let no one corrupt the truth of faith by perfidious prevarication. The Episcopate is one, of which a part is held by each one to the whole : the Church is one, which is extended more widely by the increase of its secundity.”‡ Had he meant the perfect equality of all bishops, and their absolute independence one of the other, there could not be the one Episcopate—the one faith—the one Church. Not only would the government of each church vary

\* Epist. 27, lapsis, p. 66. Edit. Wirceburgi.

† I cite from the edition of Erasmus, published at Basle in 1521. A later edition, which lies before me, presents a splendid testimony of the Primacy : “ Qui Ecclesiæ renititur et resistit, qui cathedram Petri super quem fundata est Ecclesia deserit in Ecclesia se esse confidit ? ” Wirceburgi, an. 1782. p. 349. As the true reading is contested, I have taken the less favourable.

‡ S. Cyp. l. de unit. Eccl.

according to the caprice or judgment of its prelate, but the doctrine itself would be likewise subject to the same variety and the same changes. Instead of that unity which Cyprian so powerfully inculcates as the vital principle of religion, there would be endless discord and contradiction. Evidently, then, the saint does not affirm the equality of all bishops; but he justly concludes, from the foundation of the Church on Peter, and its continuance through the successions of bishops, that bishops with their flocks, and not some laymen of themselves, are the Church. He does not here treat of the relative powers of bishops, the discussion of which was foreign to his immediate object.

The letter to Quintus, directed to prove the invalidity of baptism administered by heretics, with all the other writings in defence of this error, might be justly passed over; for the very reason, that they are directed to maintain what you, as well as I, acknowledge to be erroneous; and false principles, and incorrect expressions may be expected, when a favourite, though false, opinion is to be sustained. It might even be remarked, that several learned critics, in Germany and elsewhere,\* have called in question the authenticity of those writings, or at least have believed that they were adulterated by the Donatists, inasmuch as they think them altogether unworthy of his pen. They cannot find in them the dignity, the majesty, the eloquence, the humility, and the sweetness, which mark his other works. I do not make this observation with a view to deprive you of any benefit you may hope to derive from them, but merely from a sense of justice to the illustrious martyr, who, though he may have entertained an erroneous sentiment, in regard to a usage on which the authority of the Universal Church was not then fully ascertained, always cherished the most abundant charity, and the most inviolable attachment to the unity of the Church, as St Augustine repeatedly testifies. The passage in question, however, far from of-

\* See Binterim's work, "Die vorzüglichsten Denkwürdigkeiten der christkatholischen Kirche :" article Pabst.

fering any difficulty, affirms the Primacy. Pope Stephen, when the decree of the African council, requiring that all who came from any heretical sect to the Catholic Church should be baptized, was made known to him, rejected and condemned it, and forbade any innovation on the ancient and general practice of the Church: *Nihil innovetur, nisi quod traditum est.* The author of this letter thus opposes this fundamental reason: "Custom must not be allowed to prescribe, but reason must prevail. For neither did Peter, whom the Lord chose to be first,\* and on whom he built his Church, when Paul afterwards disputed with him in regard to circumcision, insolently claim, nor arrogantly assume anything, saying that he held the Primacy, and should be obeyed by those who were new and posterior to him.† Nor did he despise Paul, because he had been a persecutor of the Church, but he admitted the counsel of truth, and readily agreed to the just reason which Paul alleged, giving us an example of concord and patience, that we should not obstinately cherish our own sentiments, but rather adopt as our own those which are sometimes usefully and wisely suggested by our brethren and colleagues."‡ This observation is evidently directed to show that Stephen should not rest on his superior authority, but rather imitate the condescension of Peter, who, waiving the consideration of his own

\* "Quem primum Dominus elegit." Bishop H. translates it incorrectly: "whom the Lord chose first." Peter was not the first called, since Andrew, his brother, and another of the disciples of John, were previously invited, by the Saviour, to come and see, and Peter was invited by Andrew. John ch. 1.

† "Obtemperari a novellis et posteris sibi potius oportere." The translation which Bishop H. has followed in this place, is a literary curiosity: "obtemperari a novellis et posteris sibi potius oportere :" "that it was fit that Paul should comply with him in his new and lately devised ways!"

‡ Cypr. ad Quint. Ep. lxxi. p. 227. Ed. Wirceeb. Stephen opposed the ancient usage to the novelty: the writer replies that reason should prevail over usage, and that Stephen should not rest on his superior authority. The letter to Pope Stephen, which contains a reference to this letter, is suspected by Launojus (no friend to the Holy See) of being supposititious, and both seem to have come from the same source.

Primacy, yielded to the prudent suggestion of Paul. The authority itself is not at all questioned, but its mild and prudent exercise is commended. A similar reflection often occurs in the writings of those Fathers of the Church who have identified the prince of the Apostles with Cephas, reproved by Paul. "Lo!" cries St Gregory the Great, "he is reproved by an inferior, and he vouchsafes to receive the reproof, nor cares to remind him that he has received the keys of the kingdom of heaven."\*

The appellations of "colleague," "fellow bishop" and "brother," which Cyprian and Cornelius mutually give each other, are evidences of the charity which united them, and of the Episcopal character common to both: but the superiority of the Bishop of Rome is manifested whilst it is acknowledged that he is the successor of Peter, occupies the princely Chair, and has power to depose delinquent bishops. "Venerable brethren," is the title which to this day is used by the Pope when addressing his fellow bishops; yet no one thinks that he means thereby to place himself on perfect equality with them.

I am at a loss to conceive how you could have asserted, that Cyprian "assigning the reason why Rome takes precedence of Carthage, makes not the slightest allusion to any difference among the Apostles, or amongst the bishops who succeeded them; but puts it on the ground of local advantage, according to the principle mentioned before: 'Plainly, therefore, saith he, on account of its magnitude, Rome ought to precede Carthage.'" Had you not already told us that "Cyprian doubtless believed that the Church of Rome was the seat of Peter, and, therefore, he attaches the same importance to it that he attaches to Peter in relation to the other Apostles?" As to the passage brought forward by you, it regards Novatus, who having factiously and ambitiously made a deacon in Africa, went to Rome, and there attempted to intrude Novatian into the chair of Peter. "Truly, since Rome should surpass Carthage, in consequence of its greatness, he committed greater and more heinous crimes there.

\* St Greg., l. 2. in Ezech. hom. 18.

He who here had made a deacon against the Church, there made a bishop." The saint, in alluding to the greatness\* of Rome, does not specify of what greatness he speaks, and as throughout his works he so often makes reference to its spiritual principality,—“Cathedram principalem,” it is but just to understand him as alluding to it in this passage. Besides, he is not, as you insinuate, explaining why Rome precedes Carthage in the affairs of the Church, but he merely takes occasion from the greatness of the Roman Church to observe, that it might be expected that the daring and desperate sectarist would attempt there greater crimes. Is the cause of truth advanced by adducing such arguments as have no clear reference to the point at issue?

As you, after other writers, lay great stress on the controversy regarding the validity of baptism administered by heretics, I shall defer the full examination of it to my next letter, and conclude for the present with the beautiful remarks of the saint, in his letter to Pope Cornelius, on the words of Peter to Christ, related in the sixth chapter of St John: “Peter, on whom the Church had been built by the same Lord, one speaking for all, and answering with the voice of the Church says: ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the word of eternal life, and we believe and have known that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God;’ thereby signifying and showing that those who depart from Christ, perish through their own fault, but that the Church which believes in Christ, and holds what she has once known, never by any means departs from him, and that they are the Church who remain in the house of God.”†

\* Pro “magnitudine sua.” Cyp. Corn. xl ix. p. 112.

† S. Cyp. ad Cornelium, Ep. lv. p. 146.

## LETTER X.

### CONTROVERSY CONCERNING BAPTISM.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

IN the statement of the controversy concerning the validity of baptism administered by heretics, you allege "that Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, next but one after Cornelius, maintained the validity of baptism when administered by heretics and schismatics, and was warmly opposed on this account by Cyprian and the bishops of Africa, who held a provincial council on the subject. This is reversing the order of facts, and giving the reader to understand that the sentiment of Stephen was the origin of the controversy, and became the subject of examination by an African council; whereas the truth is, that the views of Cyprian and his colleagues on this head becoming known at Rome, by means of the acts of their council, Stephen, with the authority of his office, forbade them to depart from the ancient usage of the Church. Allow me to state the case in the words of an impartial writer, whose memory is held in veneration by you, no less than by the Catholic Church. St Vincent of Lerins, in his *Commonitory*, shows the zeal with which novelty is always opposed, especially by the Apostolic See, and refers to this controversy for the proof. "Not to be tedious, we shall select one instance, and this especially from the Apostolic See, that all may see more clearly than in meridian light, with what energy, with what zeal, with what perseverance the blessed successors\* of the holy Apostles have always defended the integrity of Religion as it was originally delivered. For-

\* "Beata successio." The series is put for those who form it.

merly, then, Agrippinus, bishop of Carthage, a man whose memory is venerable, was the first to maintain that baptism should be repeated, in opposition to the divine canon, to the rule of the universal Church, to the judgment of all his fellow priests, to the custom and decrees of his predecessors: which presumption was the cause of so much evil, that it not only gave all heretics a form of sacrifice, but even gave occasion of error to some Catholics. When, therefore, all cried out from all quarters against the novelty, and all priests, in every place, struggled against it, each according to his zeal, Pope Stephen, of blessed memory, who at that time was prelate of the Apostolic See, in conjunction indeed with his colleagues, but yet more than his colleagues, resisted, *thinking it fit*, as I suppose, *that he should surpass all others in the devotedness of his faith, as much as he excelled them by the authority of his station.* Finally, in the epistle which was then sent to Africa, he decreed in these words: that ‘NO INNOVATION SHOULD BE ADMITTED, BUT WHAT WAS HANDED DOWN SHOULD BE RETAINED.’ What power had the African council or decree? None, through the mercy of God.”\* How different was the light in which this venerable author of the fifth century viewed the part which Pope Stephen, in virtue of his eminent and Apostolic dignity, acted in this controversy, from that in which you have presented it to your readers.

The name of St Cyprian is not mentioned by Vincent, probably because he did not regard the fact of his being an abettor of the erroneous practice as altogether unquestionable. St Augustin assures us that there were several who maintained that Cyprian had not at all entertained that opinion, but that the letters and documents were composed by presumptuous and deceitful men, with a view to give it the sanction of his illustrious name;† and though he did not choose to rely upon this

\* Commonit., c. viii.

† “Quamquam non desint qui hoc Cyprianum prorsus non sensisse contendant, sed sub ejus nomine a præsumptoribus atque mendacibus fuisse confictum.” Epist. xciii. ad Vincentium Rog. S. 38, p. 246. Tom. II. Edit. Ven.

“Cum illud concilium, vel illa scripta, si vere ipsius sunt, et non,

defence, yet he observed in reply to the Donatists: "Cyprian either did not at all think, as you represent him to have thought, or he afterwards corrected this error by the rule of truth; or he covered this blemish, as it were, of his fair breast, with the abundance of his charity, whilst he defended most eloquently the unity of the Church spread throughout the whole world, and held most steadfastly the bond of peace."\* You have, now, from the eloquent Augustin, the satisfactory solution of the difficulty which you press on our attention. "If this glorious branch (*of the mystical vine*)"—says he, elsewhere, "had in this respect need of any purification, it was cleansed by the glorious scythe of martyrdom, not because he was slain for the name of Christ, but because he was slain in the bosom of unity for the name of Christ: for he himself wrote, and most confidently asserted, that they who are out of unity, though they should die for that name, may be slain, but cannot be crowned."†

The proofs which you adduce, of the resistance of the African bishops to Stephen, are not in my mind satisfactory, though to avoid every unnecessary discussion, where vital truth only should be sought, I am willing to let the fact of their dissent be assumed as certain, and the documents by which it is sustained pass as authentic. In the days of Augustin, both were matters which to him, as well as to others, appeared questionable. Eusebius, indeed, states that Cyprian maintained the necessity of rebaptizing those who had been baptized by heretics, and that Stephen judged that no change should be made in the ancient tradition; but he has not mentioned any act, on the part of the sainted bishop of Carthage, subsequent to the prohibition of the Pontiff, in derogation to it.‡

*sicut aliqui putant, sub ejus nomine conscripta atque conficta.*" Ep. cviii. p. 309.

\* "Porro autem Cyprianus aut non sensit omnino quod eum sensisse recitatis; aut hoc postea correxit in regula veritatis, aut hunc quasi nœvum sui candidissimi pectoris cooperuit ubere caritatis dum unitatem Ecclesiæ toto orbe crescentis, et copiosissime defendit, et perseverantisimè tenuit vinculum pacis." P. 247, ad Vincentium.

† Epist. cviii. ad Macrobius, p. 309. Edit. Ven.

‡ Euseb. l. vii. c. 3. Hist. Eccl.

St Jerom, on the contrary, informs us that the African bishops reformed their decree in consequence of the judgment of Stephen: “ St Cyprian (he says) endeavoured to shun pits that were broken, and not to drink of the water of others, and on that account reprobating the baptism of heretics, forwarded the African synod, on this subject, to Stephen, then Bishop of the Roman city, the twenty-sixth from blessed Peter: but his effort proved fruitless. Finally, those very bishops, who with him had determined that the heretics should be rebaptized, turning back to the ancient custom, issued a new decree.”\*

Waiving, however, all these motives for doubting of the fact which you allege, I proceed to your authorities,—the principal one of which is a letter bearing the name of Firmilian, bishop of Cesarea, in Cappadocia, whom, however, you repeatedly designate one of the African bishops. This document bears ample testimony to the authority claimed and exercised by Stephen, whilst it severely censures its exercise. “ I am,” says the writer, “ justly indignant at this so open and manifest folly of Stephen, who, whilst he so boasts of the place of his bishopric, and contends that he holds the succession of Peter, upon whom the foundations of the Church were placed, nevertheless, brings in many other rocks, and builds the new edifices of many churches, whilst he defends their baptism by his authority.”†

Was not this the occasion to deny, in express terms, the truth of Stephen’s claims, if they could at all be brought in question? Your author, however, is content with imputing to him *folly*, for an admission which appeared adverse to his own claims, and subversive of the constitution of the Church; but he admits the fact of his succession to Peter, and that on Peter the Church was founded. The next passage which you cite, arraigns the Roman usages in the observance of Easter and other disciplinary matters; but admits that these usages do not militate against Catholic unity, and blames Stephen for venturing to disturb this concord and union, and to reflect infamy

\* S. Hier. dial. contra Luciferian.

† Ep. Firmiliani inter Cyprian, p. 265. Tom. III. Edit. Wirceburgi.

on the Apostles Peter and Paul, by tracing to them the practice which he then defended, as if it had come down to him by the tradition of his See.\* In the third passage, he opposes to this custom that truth which came down from Christ and the Apostles, and which he fancied to favour his sentiment. All this does not imply a denial of the Primacy, but supposes an abuse of its powers, to sustain a local usage adverse to the true principles of Christianity. In the heat of disputation, this and much more might be said, by one professing, most sincerely, submission to the legitimate exercise of the Pontifical authority. In the defence of a false principle, a man, exasperated by the threat of an exercise of authority which he regards as wanton and unjust, will say much that is inconsistent with the reverence which he owes it and habitually cherishes : and the cause of the unbecoming language of Firmilian—if the letter be really his—is thus mentioned by Eusebius : “ Stephen had written concerning Helenus, and Firmilian, and all the priests through Cilicia, Cappadocia, and all the neighbouring provinces, that he would not communicate with them for this very reason, that they rebaptized heretics.”†

The passages of the letter to Pompey, attributed to Cyprian, contain bitter complaints of the sanction apparently given to heresy by the decree of Stephen. The tradition which was alleged by him is impugned, and he is accused of placing a human tradition above the truth of God. His Primacy, however, is not assailed, though he is censured as abusing the authority with which he is invested. You know too well the human heart, and the blind attachment of man to the error by which he is seduced, not to find it easy to reconcile these murmurs and strictures with the abstract admission of a superior authority.

In the political occurrences of the day, we have a striking evidence of the admission of superior power, accompanied by censures on its exercise, and in some cases by open resistance to

\* “ Adhuc etiam infamans Petrum et Paulum beatos apostolos, quasi hoc ipsi tradiderint ” Firmilian, Ep. 75, inter opera Cypriani, p. 258.

† Dionys Alex. ad Xystum P. relat. ab Eusebio Hist. Eccl. 1. vii. 5.

it, as an abuse of official prerogative. Those who were most vehement in denouncing the exercise of the veto by our late president, admitted the authority of his office, and even the constitutional right with which he was invested: and when a southern state placed herself in an attitude of resistance to the execution of some measures of the general government, she did not, in the assertion of her own sovereignty, deny that certain powers were lodged in the general government; but, on the contrary, she professed a willingness to respect their constitutional exercise. If the fact of resistance to authority implied its denial, or non-existence, I know not what power, civil or Ecclesiastical, could be maintained.

To the list of interrogatories which follow your proofs, I have only to reply, that you will find them abundantly answered in this and the preceding letter, in which numerous and strong passages of the saint have been cited, testifying the Primacy of Peter, and of the princely Chair which he founded, and recognising the right of the Roman Bishop to depose bishops unworthy of their office. Cyprian is on the calendar of saints, because, from the time of his conversion to Christianity he exercised the sublime virtues, and in death he proved the ardour and constancy of his faith and love by a glorious martyrdom. If, at a time when the general practice of the Church was not fully ascertained by him, he favoured an erroneous sentiment;—if in its defence, through zeal for the exclusive privileges of the Church, the spouse of Christ, he was wanting in deference to the Chief Bishop—which I am unwilling to believe,—there was in him no obstinate attachment to any heresy formally and solemnly proscribed in his day; there was no rejection of the principle of authority, no proud revolt against his superior; and the imperfections to which this controversy may have given occasion, were covered by the abundance of his charity, and expiated by his death for the faith of Jesus Christ. Stephen, as became his office, justly resisted the dangerous novelty, though sustained by a prelate so illustrious in the Church, and menaced to exercise those powers which God had given him, not against the truth, but for the truth. His decree was ground-

ed on the practice of the Church, and received subsequently the assent of the most venerable assemblies of its pastors; and his memory is likewise in benediction, for he is honoured as a saint and martyr of Christ, though you assert that he "attained no such distinction." You think, that had our system then prevailed, "the act of Stephen would have produced one of those two results: either Cyprian and his African colleagues must have submitted immediately, or they must have been cut off as obstinate schismatics." The submission of Cyprian is supposed by St Augustin,\* and maintained by St Jerome;† but granting that he did not submit, Stephen not having actually executed his threat of excommunication, the rebaptizing bishops were not obstinate schismatics. They were men whose attachment to a novel practice placed them in opposition with the governing authority of the Church, and their disobedience could only be extenuated by the error of judgment, which implied no heresy as long as a formal definition was wanting on the subject.

You admit that Stephen acted towards the Africans in a manner similar to that in which Victor had acted towards the Asiatics. In both instances the Pontiffs were correct, and their judgment was sustained by plenary or general councils. With regard to your assertion, that the Council of Arles confirmed the independence of the African church, I cannot but express my regret that you have allowed yourself to hazard a position which cannot be sustained by proof.

The very abettors of the practice of rebaptizing derived their strongest argument from the promises made by Christ to Peter, which, according to them, regarded him only, and the Church connected with him, and could not at all be extended to heretical conventicles. "The greatness of the error," writes Firmilian, in the passage quoted by you, "and the strange blindness of him who says that the remission of sins can be given in the synagogues of heretics, and does not abide on the foundation of the one Church, which was once built by Christ

\* S. Aug. sup. cit., p. 131.

† S. Jerome, sup., p. 132.

on the rock, may be understood from this,\* that to PETER ALONE Christ said: ‘ Whosoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whosoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.’ ”†

You assert that Cyprian was not blamed for his independence; but you have heard his great admirer, St Augustin, speak of his conduct in this respect, as the blemish of a most pure soul, covered with the breast of charity, and cleansed with the scythe of martyrdom. This saint refuses to review or to vindicate what, under excited feeling, Cyprian may have written against Stephen.‡ Your inconsistency in censuring Victor and Stephen for “tyrannical assumption of power,” whilst you admit that they sustained the correct principle and practice, must be apparent to every reflecting mind: still more manifest is the inconsistency of your attempting to prove a contrast between the primitive Church of Rome and the Church of Rome at this day, whilst you state that these two Pontiffs,—the one living in the middle of the third century, the other towards the close of the second,—assumed those very powers which are now claimed, and exercised the highest acts of Church authority. It is easy to imagine a contrast, and to cast censure on the dead, whilst history, holding up facts to view, dissipates light theories and assertions, and vindicates these illustrious men. Victor and Stephen, martyrs of Christ, are above the reach of censure. Cyprian, likewise a saint and martyr, needs no apology but that offered by the great Augustin, whose words, addressed to the Donatists, shall close this letter: “ You are, indeed, accustomed to object to us the letters of Cyprian, the opinion of Cyprian, the Council of Cyprian: why do you take the authority of Cyprian for your schism, and reject his example for the peace of the Church?”§

\* “ Hinc intelligi potest—qualis error sit.” Bishop Hopkins translates it: “ He should understand,” referring it to Stephen. This violates grammar and sense.

† Firmilian, ad Cypr. inter opera Cyp. p. 157. Ed. H.

‡ S. Aug. l. v. contra Donatistas, c. 25, p. 158. Ed. Ven. Tom. IX.  
“ Jam illa quæ in Stephanum irritatus effudit retractare nolo.”

§ S. Aug. l. ii. de bapt. contra Donat. c. iii. p. 98.

## LETTER XI.

### LACTANTIUS AND EUSEBIUS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

You introduce us to the fourth century by referring to Lactantius, whose testimony, however, you declare to be merely "negative." I should hope to be dispensed from hearing such a witness! Though negative for you, he clearly states that Peter and Paul preached at Rome all that Christ had revealed,\* as appears from the passage which you quote; and towards the close of the same chapter, he mentions their martyrdom in that city under Nero. The plan of his work did not require him to enter into an exposition of the organization of the Christian Church, since he wrote to show, that in Christianity was to be found that true wisdom, which was sought for in vain in the schools of pagan philosophy. In the last chapter only he advert's to the heresies introduced among the professors of the religion of Christ; and he is content with pointing out some obvious marks whereby all sects may be avoided, and the true religion ascertained, which you would do well seriously to consider. "For when," says he, "they are styled Plirygians, or Novatians, or Valentinians, or Marcionites, or Anthropians, or Arians, or by any other name, they have ceased to be Christians, since, having lost the name of Christ, they have adopted human and strange appellations. Therefore the Catholic Church is the only one which retains the true worship. This is the fountain of truth, this is the dwelling of faith, this is the temple of God, into which whoever does not enter, or from

\* Lactantius de vera sap. l. iv. § 221, pp. 227, 228.

which whoever departs, forfeits the hope of life and eternal salvation. It behoves no one to flatter himself by obstinate contention, for life and salvation are at stake, which will be lost and forfeited, unless cautiously and diligently provided for. But, however, as all the assemblies of heretics think that they especially are Christians, and that theirs is the Catholic Church, it should be known that the true Church is that in which confession and penance exist, which happily cures the sins and wounds to which the weakness of the flesh is subject.”\* With this testimony, we have every reason to be satisfied.

We shall now pass with you to Eusebius, the Church historian, who, you say, “furnishes the strongest *circumstantial* evidence against our doctrine of supremacy.” I thank you for the avowal, and might at once dispense myself from examining his testimony. He furnishes, confessedly, no *positive* evidence against it, and as circumstantial proof, like negative argumentation, is only admissible where positive evidence is wanting, we might spare ourselves, and our readers, the labour of an investigation which is necessarily inconclusive. The authority of Eusebius, as a commentator of Scripture, is first put forward. On the twenty-eighth verse of the sixty-seventh Psalm, which you call the sixty-eighth, after the Hebrew division, where it is said: “there is Benjamin, a youth in ecstacy of mind,”† or as some render it, “their instructor,” “their ruler,” Eusebius remarks that Paul, of that tribe, seems to be pointed out by the Psalmist; whence you infer that Paul being the subject of special prophecy, and being said to rule over the churches first, and after Paul the other Apostles, the Primacy of Peter must have been unknown to Eusebius. You must, however, know, that no argument can be adduced from so uncertain an interpretation, and that as it does not prove a ruling

\* Lactantius de vera sap., l. iv. c. xxx.

† Bishop H. states for our satisfaction and information, that Jerome, and after him Montanus, give the passage according to the Hebrew בְּנֵי. The Vulgate follows the Septuagint interpreters, who certainly knew Hebrew, but the sense of the passage is obscure.

power in Paul above the other Apostles, so it does not disprove a superior authority in one of them above him. He might have been present to the prophetic vision as the most conspicuous in the Apostolic choir, for the greatness of his labours, the number of his writings, and the ardour of his solicitude for all the churches. His miraculous conversion, whereby a persecutor became an Apostle of Jesus Christ, was a sufficient reason why he should be made the distinct subject of prophecy: but the order established among the Apostles must be determined, not by any obscure or mystical allusion, but by the express words of their Divine Master.

The casual expression of Eusebius, who calls Paul "the holy Apostle, and truly the first of all," is entirely misunderstood by you, as you yourself will allow when I give you the whole sentence. In this work the author purposed to overthrow a prevailing prejudice, that Christian faith was a rash assent sustained by no proof. He declares that he will adduce many and manifest arguments to the contrary, and adds: "for since within the recollection of our Fathers, some writing against the Gentiles and answering them, others expounding the divine Scriptures, others more accurately proving the dogmas of truth, have left many works to us, this method which we now adopt has been discovered, although *first of all* that holy Apostle Paul, casting far away all probable cavilling, and bringing certain proofs, said: 'Our discourse and preaching are not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the manifestation of the spirit and of power.'"<sup>\*</sup> I leave it to your candour to say, whether Paul is here called 'first of all the Apostles,' and not rather *first*, as having long before all apologists of Christianity proved it by unquestionable evidences of its divine origin. I cannot suppose that with a knowledge of the context, you ventured to lay stress upon this expression. It would be much more conducive to the cause of truth to ad-

\* Euseb. de Præp. Evang. l. 1. c. 3. "Primus omnium sacer ille Apostolus Paulus, probabilitatem omnem cavillatoriam longe abjiciens, ac certas afferens probationes ait."

vert to the passages of this same chapter in which the privileges of the Church, founded on the rock, are strongly insisted on. "It is certain, then," says Eusebius, "that our Saviour foretold that his doctrine would be preached throughout the world in testimony to all nations, and that the Church which was afterwards to be established by his power, would be invincible and impregnable, nor ever overcome by death, but would be firm and immovable as established and founded on a rock: and he has in fact done what he foretold. For already the fame of his Gospel has filled the world from east to west, and has reached all nations, and its preaching spreads daily. The Church, also, receiving its appellation from him has taken root, and being celebrated to the skies by the discourses of holy men, shines with the light and splendour of orthodox faith; nor does it flee before its enemies, nor yield to the very gates of death, in consequence of the few words which he uttered: 'On the rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"<sup>\*\*</sup>

After this I shall leave you to enjoy the benefit of your argument, from the praises bestowed by Eusebius on St Peter, for not causing to be recorded by Mark the glorious promise made him by the Saviour. It was enough that he established the Church at Rome, and left there the chair of authority; and that in the distant churches of Asia, where the pre-eminence of the Roman See was most likely to be called in question, the Gospels of Matthew and of John attested the privileges bestowed on him who was its founder. The modesty which does not make an ostentatious display of power is no argument against its existence.

That the authority conferred on Peter was not merely personal is evident from its nature, from its exercise and recognition in all succeeding ages. It was the authority of a pastor over the entire flock of Christ, which always needs the same care and government; it was that of the ruler of a spiritual kingdom, which must always continue, lest by divi-

\* Euseb. de Præp. Evang. l. 1, c. 3.

sions it should be brought to desolation ; it was as a foundation, the taking away whereof would necessarily be the overthrow of the entire edifice. You assume, as undoubted, that Peter suppressed all mention of it in his communications to Mark, and omitted it in his preaching ! because Eusebius admires his modesty in not causing it to be recorded by his disciple.\*

There is a difference, which does not seem to have occurred to you, between St Peter and St Paul, in regard to the magnifying of their office, which you think Peter should have done were he really Primate. Doubtless, both Apostles might have done it lawfully and usefully, whenever it was necessary to vindicate it against the censorious and malignant, as it was in the case of St Paul when certain teachers at Corinth decried his authority ; but, in stating the divine origin of his apostleship, this Apostle took care to observe, that he had been a persecutor, and that he was not worthy of the name of an Apostle. Had Peter referred to the occasion in which the extraordinary promises had been made him, he would have appeared in some measure to proclaim his own praise, since his glorious confession of the Messiah had given occasion to the eulogies and favours which our Saviour bestowed on him. His successors in the See of Rome can, without any appearance or danger of vanity, dwell on the privileges of their office, because they are not conferred on them as a personal reward, but are an inheritance derived from the prince of the Apostles, whose merit, as St Leo so beautifully remarks, does not fail even in the unworthy heir of his authority.†

Arguments, such as those just refuted, could only have been brought forward in the entire absence of all real evidence against the Primacy. You invite us, now, to open the history of this ancient writer, and you assure us, that his testimony

\* *δι' οικιστή προσειπτού μαρτυρίας.* Bishop Hopkins translates it: "by his own testimony." It should be "a domestic testimony."

† *Cujus etiam dignitas in indigno haerede non deficit.* S. Leo de anniversar. assumpt. sum.

therein, “both negatively and circumstantially is absolutely fatal to our claim.”

“The names of our Saviour’s Apostles,” says Eusebius, “are sufficiently obvious to every one, from the Gospels, but of the seventy disciples, there is no catalogue any where. Clement, in the fifth book of the ‘Hypotyposes,’ says, that the Cephas, of whom Paul says that he came to Antioch, and that he withstood him to his face, was one of the seventy disciples who had the same name with Peter the Apostle.”\* So far, at least, Eusebius has done no injury to the Primacy by preserving the testimony of Clement of Alexandria, on a point of some critical interest. Another passage in this chapter escaped your notice, in which it is stated, on the authority of St Paul, that Christ, after his resurrection, appeared “first of all to Cephas, and afterwards to the twelve;” a circumstance not unworthy of attention.†

You next give us an extract from the first chapter of the second book, in which Eusebius thus uses the testimony of Clement. “He (Clement) says, that after the ascension of our Saviour, Peter, James and John, though they had been preferred by the Lord, did not contend for the honour, but chose James the Just for bishop of Jerusalem.” And again: “The Lord imparted the gift of knowledge to James the Just, and to John, and Peter, after his resurrection.” The passage relating to the miraculous call of Paul to the Apostleship, does not con-

\* Eusebius, Hist. Eccl. l. i. c. 12.

† Potter, archbishop of Canterbury, has not thought this circumstance unworthy of remark. “Our Lord appeared to Peter after his resurrection, before the rest of the Apostles; and, before this, he sent the message of his resurrection to him in particular.” He relates the various acts of Peter after the ascension of our Lord, and concludes thus: “From these and other examples which occur in the Scriptures, it is evident that St Peter acted as Chief of the College of Apostles, and so he is constantly described by the primitive writers of the Church, who call him the Head, the President, the Prolocutor, the Chief, the Foreman of the Apostles, with several other titles of distinction.”—On Church Government, pp. 72, 74.

tain a word to warrant the idea that he was the chief of the Apostles, nor is there any semblance of proof that such was the opinion of Eusebius. The admiration expressed by Clement, that there was no contention among the three most favoured Apostles of Christ about the honour of being bishop of Jerusalem, does not surely suppose that bishopric to be something greater than their actual dignity as Apostles; but shows that they were disinterested, and that they cared not to secure to themselves a place which, at that early period of the Church, had more attractions than any other. Peter might have assumed that special bishopric, and made Jerusalem, what Rome afterwards became, the seat of his authority: but he regarded not his own convenience, but the will and glory of the Almighty. In this chapter Eusebius mentions that Simon Magus was finally detected by Peter, and suffered the just punishment of his perfidy. In the fourteenth chapter this is stated more at large, and the Primacy of Peter is plainly and broadly asserted.

Eusebius first states that Simon Magus was confounded and exposed in Judea by Peter the Apostle, and that having thence proceeded to Rome, "the all-bountiful and kind providence that watches over all things, led to Rome, as against such a pest of life, the strongest and greatest of the Apostles, Peter, who, by reason of his virtue was the leader of all the rest."\* You find fault with the version of this passage given by Valesius, and you translate it: "Peter, the powerful and great Apostle, who, on account of his ability, was the advocate of all the rest." Not to embarrass the general reader with a critical disquisition, I refer to the note† for the justification of the received version,

\* ἡ παράγοσ οὐδὲ φιλαργυροτάτη ταῦθεν ὅλη τὸ πρόσωπον τὸν καρποῖς  
καὶ μήτρα ταῦθεν αἰσθάνεται, τὸν αἰσθέτη τὴν ἔντελα τὸν λαζατὸν ἀπαίτεται προ-  
νογέρων Ηὔσεβος, οὗτος τὸ πρώτον εἰς οὗτον τηλειότερον λαμπερὰ βίον χαραγγάζει.  
Euseb. Hist. Eccl. I. ii. 14.

† I am sorry to find that Bishop Hopkins charges Valesius with unfaithfulness in his translation, because he has given the superlative *most powerful* and *greatest*, and called Peter Prince and Patron of the Apostles, rather than their advocate. Every Greek scholar will perceive that the bishop, and not Valesius, is mistaken. Adjectives in the positive form, followed by a genitive plural, sometimes convey a superlative

and merely observe, that the text contains a comparison which your translation conceals,—ascribes to the virtue of Peter what you attribute to his ability, and represents him as a leader. You gather from it only “the primacy which an advocate possesses by his skill in pleading a cause for his clients,” as if fluency of speech, tact, and other natural qualifications, gained for him a certain precedence of place, whilst the Scripture ascribes an authoritative Primacy to his faith and love.

It is needless to copy out the passage which you have quoted from the next chapter of Eusebius, in which he relates the great success of the preaching of Peter at Rome, and the occasion which was thereby presented to Mark to write his Gospel, in order to satisfy the ardent wishes of the faithful: or the twenty-fifth chapter, in which the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is narrated, reference being also made to it in the first chapter of the third book. As we are agreed on these facts, the reader may be spared their repetition. You observe that the authority of Peter over the other Apostles is not stated; but it was already mentioned in the passage which we have examined, of the fourteenth chapter of the preceding book, and no occasion was further offered to the historian to make mention of it. History is written to record facts, rather than to set forth or define the special powers of the various prelates of the Church.

From the narrative of Eusebius, that “after the martyrdom of Paul and Peter, Linus was the first who received the Episcopate of the Church of the Romans,” as is stated in the second and fourth chapters, you conclude that Peter was not himself Bishop of Rome. We must then say that it had no Bishop in the lifetime of the Apostles, and that Peter governed it with the plenitude of Apostolic authority. But the object of the historian is to show the succession of those who followed Peter,

sense. *Δέα Θεάω* means ‘supreme goddess:’ *Δέα γυναικῶν*, ‘the most excellent of women.’ *Iliad*, passim. *Διημόνες ξείρων*. O! most excellent guest. *Odyss.* xiv. 448. *Putronus* corresponds to *προστύχος*. It means sometimes ‘one who pleads a cause,’ but in this sense it could scarcely be applied to Peter, as the Apostles needed no defender. In adding “Principes,” Valesius only meant to develope the meaning more accurately, and used a word applied by all the Fathers to Peter.

which presupposes the exercise of Episcopal authority by him to whom all others succeed. He does not, therefore, point out Linus as the first who governed the Roman Church, but “as the first after Peter,” as he expressly says,\* and all antiquity designates that See “the Chair of Peter.”

In recording the names of the bishops who occupied the various Sees, Eusebius does not appear to you to make any distinction between the bishops whose succession he records. Thus you say “in Book iv., ch. 4, he gives us an account of what the title to the chapter calls the bishops of Alexandria and Rome under the same emperor.” The inversion of order in your version is here somewhat singular, since the title speaks of Rome and Alexandria: nor is this the only instance of this character. Eusebius generally observes this precedence, as in the passage which you have *partly* quoted: “In the third year of the reign of Hadrian, Alexander, Bishop of the Romans, dies, having terminated the tenth year of his administration, and was succeeded by Xystus. About the same time Justus succeeds Primus, who was in the twelfth year of his presidency over the parish of the Alexandrines.”† There is, surely, some distinction in the order and in the expressions, and though I am not anxious to give importance to either, whilst more conclusive evidences abound, I cannot but remind you of them, when you assert so confidently the total absence of all distinction. You censure Valesius for rendering in some places the “Episcopate” by the classical term of Pontificate, though long before the days of Eusebius, the Bishop of Rome was styled by Tertullian,—sarcastically indeed, but yet with reference to his acknowledged power,—the Sovereign Pontiff.

If nothing, then, be said, as you observe, of the Apostolic See, it is nevertheless distinctly stated that Eleutherus, the twelfth in succession from the Apostles, received the Episcopate.‡ If

\* Πράγμα μετα της Ρωμαιων ικαλοντας την ιπισκοπην οδη πρέπειος κληροθειος διδικταται. Euseb. l. iii. c. 4.

† Euseb. Hist., l. iv. c. 4.

‡ Eus. l. iv. c. 1. Hist. Ecc.

'the chair of Peter,' 'the Chief See,' 'the mother and root of all churches,' be not mentioned by the historian, it is sufficient for us to know that all these terms were applied to the Roman Church by St Cyprian, nearly eighty years before Eusebius wrote his history. What you allege on his authority, that the very chair on which James the bishop of Jerusalem sat, was preserved with reverence down to his time,\* proves how natural and how ancient is the veneration of relics, or memorials of the departed just: but it proves nothing against the Apostolic authority of Peter and his successors, and I know not how its introduction here can illustrate the point in dispute.

In regard to the controversy concerning the paschal observance, as I have already treated of it elsewhere, I feel that it would be abusing the reader's patience to re-open its examination. The facts related by Eusebius fully harmonize with our principles. Local synods were convoked, but that of Rome carried with it greater weight than all others. Victor directs Polycrates to assemble his fellow bishops, and endeavour to induce them to conform to the general usage of the Church. Polycrates obeys: but all remonstrate. Victor, finding that persuasion and all conciliatory measures fail, resolves on the severest exercise of his authority. Some deem this harshness, and write with bitterness against it, whilst Irenæus respectfully† remonstrates; and the Pontiff relents, and tolerates what he cannot now remedy, without severing from the Church many of its valuable members.

Of the points you have marked as hostile to our claims, the first is the convocation of these local councils without any direction from the Bishop of Rome: yet you tell us immediately after, that "Victor, the Bishop of Rome, takes upon him to request Polycrates, bishop of Samos, to summon a council and concur with the decision of the Western churches; threatening him, too, as it seems by Polycrates's answer, with the consequences of refusal." A request, accompanied by a threat, you

\* Eus. l. vii. c. 19.

† Προστηνόντας. Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., l. 5. c. 24.

will allow, very much resembles a command, and it seems that Polycrates, far from disregarding the threat, summoned the council, although he sent a strong remonstrance in vindication of the practice of the Eastern churches. As to the other synods, it matters little for our point whether they were called together by order of Victor, or whether they assembled in virtue of a summons from the local prelate of highest rank. To this day provincial councils can be held without any special leave or order from the Bishop of Rome. You state that Eusebius condemns Victor. I have, again and again, perused his narrative without being able to find the proof of your assertion. He relates the murmurs and remonstrances of several bishops against the threatened measure, who, as you rather ambiguously translate, "pressed upon him with great severity."\* The whole narrative shows that the historian regarded the obstinacy of the Asiatics as unjustifiable, though he may have inclined to the sentiment of those who thought the severity of Victor precipitate.†

Eusebius's narrative of the controversy concerning baptism, shows that he considered Cyprian in error as innovating on ancient usage, and Stephen right in opposing the change. The great displeasure which, as he informs us, Stephen felt‡ at the attempt of Cyprian to introduce a new practice, surely indicates the feeling of a Superior who watched over the integrity of faith, and the maintenance of tradition unchanged throughout

\* Φίγεται δι καὶ αἱ τούτων φάσαι, πληκτικατέρου καθαπτομένας τε Βίκτορος. The verb here used means invariably in Homer to address courteously. Some later writers use it to express invective. See Damiani Lexicon Homericum.

† Archbishop Potter speaks of the act of Victor as unjust, but adds "however, it is a good evidence that excommunication was used at this time in the Church."—*On Church Government*, p. 335. He might have said with equal truth, that it is good evidence that the Roman Bishop claimed and exercised power over the bishops of Asia, and that these claims were not called in question, though the exercise of the power was complained of.

‡ Eus. Hist., l. vii. c. 3. Επὶ τούτῳ διηγαντεῖς.

the whole Church. The letter of Dionysius of Alexandria to Pope Xystus, of which the historian gives an extract, shows the measures which Stephen had threatened to adopt against the Asiatic prelates who presumed to rebaptize, but does not at all present these measures as acts of usurped authority. On the contrary, he states that, as it was reported to him that in very great synods the practice of rebaptizing had been sanctioned, he had written to Stephen in terms of earnest entreaty.\* How all this is “totally irreconcilable with our doctrine of supremacy,” you may have perceived, but certainly have not informed us. We see in it strong evidence that the Bishop of Rome exercised at that time the same power which his successor now claims, and though some clung with fond attachment to usages which he condemned, they did not question the authority of his office. They remonstrated and entreated, and in some instances proved refractory, always alleging that the circumstances did not call for the measures which were urged on them.

The history of the council of Antioch, as related by Eusebius,† appears to you inconsistent with our doctrine on the Primacy of the Roman Bishop, because the heresy of Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch, was condemned in that council, he himself deposed, and Domnus substituted in his place, without any intervention of the Bishop of Rome. Give me leave to observe again, that a wide distinction exists between the Primacy itself, which is of divine institution, and the exercise of rights that may emanate from it, which may be regulated by special arrangements and enactments suited to the diversity of times and places. The causes of faith are, according to the present discipline of the Church, reserved to the Holy See and Ecumenical Councils; but before the introduction of this discipline, they were often examined in councils, provincial, national, or of a more ample, though not general character. The decisions were transmitted, however, to the successor of St

\* Eus. Hist., l. vii. c. 3. Περὶ τοῦτας αὐτὰ πάντας δέομενος.

† Euseb. l. vii. c. 27. Hist. Eccl.

Peter, and communicated likewise to the prelates of the Universal Church, that by the confirmation of Him whose privilege it is to confirm his brethren in faith, and the concurrence of his colleagues, they might be regarded as the authentic judgment of the whole Episcopal College. Hence, the council of Antioch directed the report of their proceedings in the first instance to Dionysius, Bishop of Rome, next to Maximus of Alexandria, and then to all their colleagues, and the whole Catholic Church. This was done with one accord, by unanimous determination,\* to give the last seal to the decision, and it was only when the approbation of Rome was received, that the cause was considered as terminated.†

The deposition of the heretical bishop, and the substitution of another by the council, were in accordance with the discipline of that age. As long as they were not reserved to the Chief Pastor himself, these acts could be done by the local tribunal formed by the bishops of the province, with their metropolitan at their head, or a greater assembly of bishops with a higher presiding prelate. To save the Episcopal character and dignity from being sacrificed to individual partialities and local prejudices, both are now referred to the Bishop and Father of bishops. Your reasoning, then, on the proceedings of the council falls to the ground, when the diversity of disciplinary regulations in various ages is attended to. These proceedings were right, and perfectly in harmony with the Primacy; but at this day, the course would be somewhat different, because modified by posterior Ecclesiastical legislation. I need not tell you, that in republics and empires, the exercise of the prerogatives of public functionaries, even of the highest order, may wisely vary in conformity with positive enactments or regulations suited to circumstances.

The high rank of the Bishop of Rome in the Church of

\* *ex comune yμαντι, ex communī sententia.* Bishop Hopkins's version has 'by common consent' in italics, as if to insinuate that it was a matter of courtesy and choice, rather than a duty which they judged it necessary to fulfil. The force of the Greek text is, *by unanimous decree*.

† Augustin, Serm. 132, de verbis Apost. c. 10.

Christ, is not only apparent from the mention of his name at the commencement of the epistle of the council, but also from the fact that the pagan emperor, Aurelian, left the decision of the right of property or occupancy of the Church, from which Paul of Samosata was driven, to him, at least virtually, by ordering the building to be given up to those to whom the bishops of Italy and the Bishop of Rome should write.\* The special mention of the Roman Bishop shows his pre-eminence, and the mention of the bishops of Italy in conjunction with him was, because they were known to be in his communion. Neither he, nor they, could have been regarded in the affairs of the Eastern church, had no special Ecclesiastical power been vested in either. It is manifest that they could not claim it: and consequently it must be his prerogative.

The letters of Constantine, which Eusebius has preserved, are referred to in the next place, for evidence against the Primacy of the Roman Bishop. To form a more correct judgment of them, it is necessary that we should explain the occasion on which they were written. Early in the fourth century, the disappointed ambition of some individuals gave rise to the schism of the Donatists, who both assailed the character, and called in question the lawfulness of the election and ordination of Cecilian, bishop of Carthage, and endeavoured to intrude Majorinus in his stead. They accused him of having been ordained by, and continuing in communion with, bishops guilty of delivering over the Divine Scriptures to the pagans in the time of persecution. The schismatics applied to Anulinus, proconsul of Africa, and, through him, to the emperor Constantine, begging that the facts of the case might be investigated, and that the judges might be chosen from Gaul, where the emperor then was. Constantine, on reading their petition, observed: "You ask of me a trial in the world, when I myself await the judgment of Christ."† However, he deemed it expedient to yield to their request, and therefore appointed three French bishops to assist at the trial, but referred the examination of the cause

\* Euseb. I. vii. c. 30.

† Optat. Milev. I. 1, n. 23.

to Miltiades, the Bishop of Rome, that "before him, as also before Rheticius, Maternus and Marinus his colleagues, Cecilian might be heard, as was most conformable to the divine law." On this occasion he addressed a letter, whose inscription now reads: "Constantine Augustus to Miltiades, Bishop of Rome, and to Marcus."<sup>\*</sup> "Here it is evident (you observe) that the Bishop of Rome is not addressed as a man who already held the office of appellant judge over the whole Church, but conjointly with Marcus, and merely as an equal among his colleagues." To me, this is not, by any means, evident. On the contrary, Constantine having already expressed his astonishment, that his authority should be at all appealed to in a cause of this nature, and having referred the matter to Miltiades, contrary to the wishes of the Donatists, but "as was most conformable to the divine law," yielded only so far to their request as to name three French bishops,<sup>†</sup> who would concur with the Pontiff in the hearing of the cause. He knew, therefore, that of divine right it appertained to this tribunal. The appointment of these bishops, as associate judges, was a measure of prudence, directed to conciliate the Donatists, and to dispose them for receiving the decision with submission; but neither was it intended nor calculated to reduce the Pontiff to a state of equality with his colleagues, in which he might be forced to yield to their votes. With the same view of making the examination with the greatest solemnity, Melchiades<sup>‡</sup> called to his aid fifteen Italian bishops, so that the trial took place in the presence of nineteen bishops, over whom Melchiades presided. Hence the judgment passed on this occasion is styled by St Augustin in many parts of his works "the judgment of Melchiades."<sup>§</sup> It is plain, therefore, that he was not as an equal among his colleagues, and that he did not act by the mere delegation of the emperor; for what delegate judge, to whom as-

\* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. I. x. c. 5.

<sup>†</sup> Maternus of Cologne, then considered as part of the Gauls, Rheticius of Autun, and Marinus of Arles. They are inaccurately called "bishops of Italy" by Bishop Hopkins.

<sup>‡</sup> The name is variously written.

<sup>§</sup> Brevic. Collat. diei. 3. c. 18. c. 20, "in judicio Melchiadis."

sociates had been given to control and guard his decision, would dare call in a number of others, and place them on the judgment-seat with those specially appointed? As to Marcus, named after Miltiades in the inscription, we know not who he was, so that it is not easy to derive an argument from the addition of his name to that of the Pontiff.\* It is not strange that the complaints of the Donatists were made to the emperor, and not to the Pope; for schismatics are wont to crouch to the civil power, and to seek its favour and protection; but Constantine sufficiently declared, that the divine law had provided a different tribunal.

The next letter of Constantine, quoted by you from Eusebius, is addressed to Chrestus, bishop of Syracuse, and is a summons to attend a council to be held at Arles, for the purpose of terminating the schism for which the sentence of the Roman Council under Melchiades had not proved an efficacious remedy. You compare the address of this epistle "singly to the bishop of Syracuse," with that to Miltiades, the Roman Bishop, and Marcus; and without caring to ascertain by what chance this name came there, or whom it designates, you say that this letter was addressed to Miltiades and *others*. But this surely is too trivial for a scholar. You remark that "the peace of the Church had not been restored by the judgment of the bishops of Italy, including the Bishop of Rome: but is it any thing strange that schismatics should not acquiesce in a sentence pronounced against them? "How can it be expected,"—asks St Augustin, in reference to this very case,—“that a party with a bad cause should praise the judges by whose sentence he was defeated?”† The obstinacy of the Donatists excited the indignation of the emperor himself, who, on hearing of their appeal, exclaimed: “O raging and frantic

\* See Baron. Ann. an. 313. Tom. III. p. 105, who conjectures that it is a mistake, and that an epithet of the Roman Bishop was originally there. The learned lawyer Clinch thinks differently. See his work on Church Government, p. 166. Note.

† Aug. Epist. 162.

audacity! as is usual in the causes of the Gentiles, they have lodged an appeal!"\* His solicitude, however, to restore peace induced him to allow the cause to be re-opened at Arles in a more numerous assembly, that the complaints made by the Donatists of the partiality of the judges might lose all semblance of truth. "He granted," says St Augustin, "this new trial at Arles, by other bishops, not because it was any longer necessary, but yielding to their perversity, and desiring by every means possible to restrain their importunity."† The adoption of this measure by the emperor, with these views and under these circumstances, in a cause that more immediately regarded persons than faith, is no proof that he did not recognise the Primacy of the Holy See. His interference in the whole affair was manifestly reluctant, and solely directed to procure peace, by the adoption of every measure that might appear equitable and just, even to the most refractory. In the letter to Chrestus, he expressly states that the discord should have ceased, by the willing assent of the parties, on the issuing of the judgment. This you understand of a voluntary agreement, though a decision surely implies the obligation of submission.

With your eulogies of Eusebius, whom you have placed among the saints, I am not disposed to interfere, farther than to remark that he is generally reputed to have been infected with the heresy of Arius. But his history is a precious treasure of antiquity, in which are preserved many documents that would otherwise have been lost, and the memory of many facts that might otherwise be unknown. It is, nevertheless, liable to many exceptions, though not as containing any thing irreconcileable with the Primacy of Peter and his successors in the Roman See. The "circumstantial evidence" which you have thought that you discovered in it against this Primacy, is purely imaginary. Eusebius, on the contrary, bears positive evidence in its favour, by asserting that Peter was the strong

\* "O rabida furoris audacia! Sicut in causis gentilium fieri solet, appellationem interposuerunt." S. Opt. Mil. l. i. n. 24.

† S. Aug. Ep. 162.

and great one of the Apostles, the leader of the rest—that on him, as on a rock, the Church was built—that he preached the faith, successfully, at Rome, and sealed it by martyrdom—that the succession of bishops was there continued—that to Rome recourse was had in all the great controversies of the times—and that its bishop issued his decrees to Asia, and to Africa, equally as to the less distant provinces, and enforced them with the highest exercise of Ecclesiastical power. These facts are sufficient to convince us of the faith and practice of the Christian world, during the ages which Eusebius has described, and abundantly supply the absence of pompous phrases, or learned dissertations on Pontifical prerogative.

The silence of the Council of Arles, in regard to the authority of the Holy See, will not surprise those who consider that no controversy agitated the Church at that time, and that it is not the practice of the Church to define undisputed doctrines. It was enough to enforce the observance of the general practice of the Church in regard to baptism administered by heretics, and thus by the fact to sustain the exercise of Pontifical authority.

You conclude your fifteenth chapter with the observation, that you “will not say that no honest mind, with these facts before it, can subscribe to our doctrine, because you cannot tell to what extent an honest mind may be deluded.” You will not, of course, be offended, if I, for the same reason, abstain from saying, that no honest mind, with the authorities of Scripture, and of the early writers of the Church, and the facts of early history before it, can reject the Primacy; but when you add, that our appeal to antiquity on this head presumes most strongly on the ignorance of mankind, the confidence of your assertion leaves me without expression. For its refutation, I need only refer to the testimonies which you yourself have quoted.

## LETTER XII.

### GENERAL COUNCILS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

YOUR sixteenth chapter contains an exposition of our doctrine on General Councils, derived from our Douay Catechism, and from our canon law, as you state, on the authority of the canonist Gibert. I regret that, in an investigation of such importance, you have not had recourse to the fountain, rather than to any channel through which its waters may flow; and that you should embarrass the controversy concerning the Primacy, by discussions about its rightful prerogatives. Christian union being so desirable, we should seek to ascertain what is absolutely essential to our agreement in faith, and reserve other investigations, as of minor importance, to the happy time in which we might mutually embrace each other as brethren in Christ. But I am not disposed to be fastidious, and I cheerfully assent to the statement of the Catechism that "the definitions of a General Council, approved by the Pope, are infallible in matters of faith." The reasons and proofs adduced by the author of a Catechism, or a writer on canon law, in support or explanation of this principle, are to be distinguished from the doctrine itself. With Gibert, I maintain, that it is the rightful prerogative of the Chief Pastor of the Church, to convoke the bishops of the Christian world in General Council; for there exists no other individual, Ecclesiastical or civil, whose summons all bishops throughout Christendom are bound to respect. It is his right to preside; for in an Ecclesiastical assembly, the highest dignitary of the Church should surely occupy the first place. Its definitions of faith,

made with his concurrence, are like those of the Apostolic Council, the authentic manifestations of revealed truth, being made by the authority of the Holy Ghost ; but they are distinguished from the Holy Scriptures, inasmuch as these latter were written under the impulse and dictation of the Holy Spirit, whilst the doctrinal definitions of councils suppose only a peculiar assistance of the same divine Spirit, by which those who compose them are preserved from error. The distinction between doctrine and discipline, which you seem to treat rather lightly, must be constantly held in view : for the former, being the revelation of God, who is one and unchangeable, must never vary ; whilst the latter, being a matter of usage and positive enactment, is liable to change, at the discretion of the legislative power by which it was enacted. You have not caught the meaning of your author, when you represent him as teaching that “the decisions of General Councils *on matters of law* are infallible !” “*Circa jus*” means, “on principle,” or right, as distinguished from personal facts. The judgment of the tribunals of the Church in regard to persons, is not infallible, because it depends on human testimony, which may deceive ; but the declaration of right, or principle, of what is lawful or unlawful, according to the divine law, is made with unerring authority.

The inferences which you draw from the principles of your author are not correct. From the conditions specified being sufficient and ordinarily required to constitute a General Council, it does not necessarily follow, that the absence of one or other of them can in no way be supplied, and that no decrees can attain the same authority, unless all the conditions have been observed. For instance, it is the right of the Pope to call the bishops together ; but if they have come together at the call of another, or by a spontaneous movement, and he approve of the convocation, and give his full concurrence to its proceedings, the informality of the first measure cannot vitiate the acts of the Council. In like manner it is his right to preside, either in person, or by one or more specially delegated to represent him : but if a Council were held in which he was

not present or represented, of whose acts, however, when communicated to him, he approved,—this ratification would supply the deficiency; and the decrees might be regarded as the expression of the faith of the Episcopal body and its head—that is, of the entire doctrinal tribunal of the Church. It may be well to keep in mind these remarks when viewing the proceedings of Councils held in a great diversity of circumstances. In approaching the examination, you again implore our patience, and urge us to perseverance in our inquiries after truth; you even pray for that sincere and candid spirit which is essential to every lover of truth. May your prayer have been heard!

I shall spare my readers the labour of examining your proofs that the Emperor Constantine summoned the Council of Nice, by admitting the fact. I beg, however, to observe, that if that convocation was made at the request of the Pontiff, or if it was acquiesced in by him, it could neither detract from its authority as a General Council, nor disprove the right of convocation, which officially belongs to the head of the Church. That it was acquiesced in by Silvester, is beyond question; and we have high authority for believing that it was made at his express solicitation. Rufinus, an author of the fifth century, says, that Constantine convoked the Council in compliance with the wishes of the priests: \* and in the sixth General Council held at Constantinople, Constantine and Silvester are said to have assembled the Nicene Council. † In the Council of Chalcedon, held about one hundred and twenty-five years after that of Nice, the Legate of the Holy See insisted, successfully, on the exclusion of Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, from the Council, because he had “presumed and dared to celebrate a General Synod without the authority of the Holy See, which never had been allowed, never had been done.”‡ Would this have been affirmed

\* “Tum ille, ex Sacerdotum sententia, apud urbem Nicœam Episcopale Concilium convocat.”—Ruffin. l. 1. Hist. Eccl. c. 1.

† “Constantinus semper Augustus, et Silvester laudabilis, magnam atque insignem in Nicaea Synodus congregabunt.”—Act. 18, in Serm. Prophonetico.

‡ “Quia præsumpsit, et ausus est Synodus Generalem facere sine au-

without contradiction, if the authority of that See had not sanctioned the convocation of the very first Council? The reasons why the formal summons was issued by Constantine are sufficiently obvious. The Roman laws forbade all assemblies unless sanctioned by the emperor,\* and the poverty of most of the bishops would have kept them from the council, had not the imperial munificence furnished them with the privilege of conveyance at the expense of the state.† Hence Theodoret, relating the summoning of the bishops, says, that Constantine authorized them to use the public horses and beasts of burthen, and ordered all things to be furnished necessary for their journey.‡

In alluding to this call, the emperor, addressing the bishops, observed: “Being particularly desirous that a remedy might be found for existing dissensions, through my exertions and diligence, I sent for you all without delay. And although, indeed, I rejoice exceedingly in beholding your assembly, yet I consider that I shall have accomplished my desires,§ then especially, when I shall see all united in mind, and one peaceful harmony prevailing among all, which it were becoming for you, who are consecrated to God, to obtain for others like-

thoritate Sedis Apostolicæ, quod numquam licuit, numquam factum est.”  
Act. I, Conc. Chalc.

\* Cod. Theod. tit. de episcopo et clericis. L. Conventicula.

† Hence the letters called “Tractoriae.” Vide Cod. L. xii. de cur. pub. tit. 2, et tit. 3. evectiones. ‡ Theodoret, Hist. l. 1. c. 7.

§ Bishop Hopkins professes to cite from our own version, but he mistakes “ex animi sententia,” for the expression of the sentiments of Constantine, whereas it means, “according to his desire,” as may be seen in Cicero, and as is manifest from the text: τότε δὲ μάλιστα κρίνεται ἐνχαρτέμενον πρᾶξεν. The bishop’s translation is: “I think it becomes me so to order matters by the expression of my sentiments.” He has been equally unlucky in his version of the latter part of the sentence: “which (peaceful agreement), indeed, it is right for you, since you are consecrated to God, and also for others to make the subject of earnest prayer to the Deity.” The text means what I have expressed above, and the Latin version gives the same meaning. οὐδὲ ἔτερος ίμας πρέπει αὐτὸν πρεσβύτερον ταῖς τῷ Θεῷ καθιερωμένοις. See Euseb. l. iii. de Vita Constant. c. xii. et Col. Conc. Mansi, Tom. II. Col. 661.

wise.'" You translate the text, or version, in such a way that the common reader might suppose Constantine hoped to controul the bishops by the expression of his sentiments, which was far from being the case, since he showed the most marked respect towards them, declining to take his seat until they had requested him,\* and then leaving the presidents of the Council at liberty to open the proceedings.†

Your introduction here of the Council of Jerusalem, of which we have already treated, calls simply for this remark, that, although the Scripture does not state who convened it, it states that Peter was there, and spoke with authority and effect. Silvester, "Bishop of ancient Rome," was also at Nice, in the person of his legates, his extreme old age having prevented his personal attendance.‡ The assembly, therefore, though not formally convened by his summons, had his sanction. You triumph in the silence of the emperor, in his address, in regard to Silvester; but it is enough that Eusebius and Theodoret specially marked the cause of absence.§ It was not to be expected that the emperor should introduce his name into the address, which was directed to express the ardent desire which he entertained of seeing all concordant in faith. The presence of the legates of Silvester was a sufficient evidence to the bishops that he approved of the holding of the Council. Had Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, spoken in reply, as you conceive, he had no ground for complaining of any omission, inconsistent with the respect due to the Pontifical authority, nor would courtesy have permitted it; but, the fact is, he addressed the emperor, at the opening of the assembly, in a brief manner, thanking God for the triumph of Christianity over paganism, and exhorting the emperor to zeal for the faith.|| The emperor then delivered his address.

The assembling of the bishops of all Christendom, at the call of the first Christian emperor, was a matter of no difficulty,

\* Euseb. l. iii. de Vita Constantini, c. x.

† Ib. c. xiii. περιδίδου τὸν λόγον τοῦτο τὸν συνοδεῖν προσίδεισα.

‡ Euseb. l. iii. c. vii. Vitæ Constantini.

§ Theodoret, l. i. Hist. c. vii. p. 24.

|| Euseb. l. iii. Vitæ Constant. c. xi. Theodoret l. i. Hist. c. vii. p. 25.

because the empire was co-extensive with Christianity: but in a different order of things, when rival and hostile potentates divide the dominion of the Christian world, a General Council would be impracticable, if it depended on the civil power. Christ could not have left his Church dependant, in a matter of such importance, on the contingency of the universal dominion of one sovereign, or on the concurrence of many. He must have left in the Church itself a power which, amidst all the vicissitudes of civil government, might be exercised. “The Bishop of bishops” is the only one whose mandate can at all times reach all, and gather together, “from the East and from the West,” those whom the Holy Ghost has placed to govern the Church of God. The judicious Count Le Maistre observes, that “those who have ascribed this power to the temporal authority, have not paid attention to the strange paralogism of which they were guilty. They suppose an universal and even eternal monarchy: they always go back, without reflecting on it, to the times in which all the mitres could be convoked by a single sceptre, or by two.”\*

You say, on the authority of Gibert, that “the first Council of Constantinople in their epistle to Theodosius, in which they give him thanks, and render an account of what they had done, declare that they had been summoned together at his command.” Yet “the whole truth” required you to state that in their synodical letter to Pope Damasus and the Roman synod, they declare that they had assembled at Constantinople in consequence of letters addressed by him to the emperor to that effect.† This shows us “the concord of the emperors in the cause of piety,”‡—Damasus and his colleagues, “calling them, as his own members, to the synod at Rome, by means of the letters of the most pious emperor,”§ that the Bishop of Rome

\* Du Pape l. i. c. iii. p. 24.

† εκ τῶν περιστεριῶν γραμμάτων τῶν παρὰ τῆς ὑμετέρας τιμιότητος μετατηνὲν ἀκυλήια σύνοδου, πρὸς τὸν Θεοφίλεστον βασιλέα θεοδόσιον ἐπιστελθεῖσαν.

‡ νῦν εν τῇ τῶν αὐτοκράτορων περὶ την ἐυσέβειαν συμφωνίᾳ.

§ ἡρξε ὡς σίκεια μέλι προτεκτέσασθε δικ τῶν τε Θεοφίλεστος βασιλέως γραμμάτων.

and his colleagues “ might not reign alone, but the Eastern bishops might reign with them.”\* The convocation of the General Council of Ephesus was made in like manner by Theodosius the younger, but with the full assent of Pope Celestine, who, addressing the emperor, informs him that he would be present by those whom he sent.† St Leo, addressing the emperor Marcian, assures him that his zeal, which had led him to convoke a synod, was highly acceptable;‡ and the bishops of Mæsia, writing to the emperor Leo, successor of Marcian, observe: “ Many bishops assembled in the city of Chaledon by order of Leo, the Roman Bishop, who is truly the head of bishops.”§

These facts of history leave *untouched* the privilege which we claim for the Primacy, because the assent of the Pontiff is in all cases manifest, at least, from the fact of his being represented in the council. You will, perhaps, not deny that the emperor had no divine right to summon the bishops to council, and if you deny this right to the Pontiff, you must suppose that there is no authority left by Christ whereby these important and venerable assemblies can be effectually convened. The convocation of the Western Councils of an œcumeneical character, having been confessedly made by the immediate authority of the Roman Bishop, confirms the reasoning whereby this right is vindicated as the privilege of his office.

The presidency of General Councils is another privilege which our canonists claim for the Roman Pontiff. Osius, a bishop of Cordova, a small town in Spain, is admitted to have presided at Nice, but, on the authority of Gibert, you assert that there is no proof that he was there as the legate of the Apostolic See. A fact of this kind, however, is to be determined, not by the denial or assertion of any modern writer, but on historical testimony, or, in its absence, on presumptive and circumstantial evidence. Gelasius of Cyzicum, an author

\* μη χαρις ιμπον βροταισιοντε. Theod. Eccl. Hist. I. v. c. ix.

† S. Celest. Ep. ad Theod.

‡ S. Leo, Ep. ad Marcian Imp.

§ Conc. Chalc. Act. Col. Conc. Hard.

of the fifth century, expressly states, on the authority of Eusebius, "that the far-famed Osius himself, of Spain, WHO HELD THE PLACE OF SILVESTER, BISHOP OF THE GREAT ROME, together with the Roman priests Vito and Vincentius, was present, with many others, in that assembly."\* Photius refers to the same passage; and though it is not found in Eusebius at this day, men of great critical judgment consider that the present reading warrants the belief that it originally existed in it, as quoted by Gelasius. "From Spain itself," it now reads, "one of great renown, with many others, was present in that assembly."† No mention being made of his name, we are warranted in suspecting that it, with the other words cited by Gelasius, has disappeared from the text. Socrates, the historian, mentions him first, in conjunction with the priests Vitus and Vincentius, confessedly Roman legates, and gives to the three precedence of the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch, which they could not have obtained, unless as representatives of a Bishop superior to these patriarchs.‡ To suppose that the presidency was given to Osius on account of his age, or personal merit, is to show little acquaintance with the principle of order uniformly observed in all the Councils of the Church. The dignity of the See, which he occupies or represents, uniformly determines who shall preside in these venerable assemblies, since, according to St Leo, "although the merits of prelates be sometimes different, the rights of their Sees continue unchanged."||

Your observations on the Council of Constantinople, and its subscriptions, might have been spared, had you adverted to the acknowledged fact that it was an oriental council, which subsequently obtained a degree of authority equivalent to that of a General Council, from the harmony of its decrees with that of the Roman synod,¶ to which its decrees were forwarded, with

\* Gelas. l. 2. Hist. Conc. Nic. c. v.

† Photius Cod. 88. ‡ Euseb. l. 3, de Vita Constantini.

§ Socratus, l. 1. c. 9.

|| St Leo, cit. ab Hincmaro, Ep. ad Nicolaum, p. 520.

¶ See the letter of the oriental bishops to Pope Damasus. Theodoret, l. 5, c. 9. Eccl. Hist.

a request to Pope Damasus to adopt them. That the Bishop of Rome was not there, either in person or by his representatives, is, therefore, no proof against his right to preside at a council perfectly Ecumenical. "The melancholy evidence of fraud in the forgery of false subscriptions," on which you dwell so pathetically, might not appear quite so just a subject for your strictures, had you reflected in how many instances the confusion of records, or the mistakes of copyists, may have produced the errors which you rather hastily ascribe to premeditation and corrupt design. Charity, which thinketh no evil, would have required you to pause before you made a charge of so serious a character. Your allegation is disproved by the fact that no effort is made to prove that Papal legates presided, though the names of some who presided at the Council of Chalcedon were by some mistake attached to one manuscript. Catholic divines are wont to examine with the severest scrutiny all the writings which have come down from the early ages of the Church, and if they discover any reason to doubt of their authority, they avow it without hesitation, although they do not easily ascribe to malice what may have arisen from mistake.

That St Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, presided in the third General Council, is a fact which you state after Gibert. Whether this author suppresses a fact equally certain, that St Celestine, Bishop of Rome, had by a special letter commissioned him to exercise his authority and hold his place,\* I am unable to say, as his works are not within my reach; but fair and honourable controversy certainly required that it should have been noticed.

As to the second Council of Constantinople, which, like the first, was not Ecumenical in its origin, but obtained, subsequently, by the assent of the Pontiff and of the Church, the authority of an Ecumenical Council, the absence of the Pontiff, or his legates, is sufficiently accounted for. The oriental

\* συναρχεῖσθαι τοιν την αὐθεντικήν την ἡμέτερην Θόρυ, εἰ την  
μητέρα την τίποτε διαδοχῆν οὐτ' οἰκονόμην χρησταίνεται. Letter of Cel. to Cyril,  
c. xiii. Act. Conc. Eph. p. 3123. Coll. Hardouin, Tom. I.

bishops used every possible effort to induce Pope Vigilius, who was then at Constantinople, to be present; but he, being apprehensive of a schism in the West, from the condemnation of the works called the "three chapters," refused to attend. The bishops there assembled deemed the scandal which the toleration of these works occasioned in the East greater than any evil that might arise from their condemnation, and, after repeated embassies to Vigilius, proceeded to hold the council without him. They did not form a General Council, since the West was not in any way represented: but they conceived that the condemnation of these writings might take place in a council not absolutely general, and they hoped ultimately to succeed, as they in fact succeeded, in obtaining the assent and ratification of the Pontiff.

When you blazoned forth in capitals, that "THE FATHERS OF THAT COUNCIL DID NOT ACKNOWLEDGE OUR DOCTRINE," you must have been but little acquainted with its acts and proceedings. In their letter to Vigilius, they thus loudly profess their veneration for the Apostolic See: "We receive and embrace the epistles of the prelates of the Apostolic See of Rome, as well of the others, as of Leo, of holy memory, written concerning the right faith, and the four councils, or any one of them."\* They pray him to grant that the matters may be examined—"YOUR HOLINESS PRESIDING OVER US."† Prudence prescribed to him a different course, but he granted permission that the council should be held. "Knowing your desire," says he, "we grant your petition, that a canonical synod be held, about the three chapters, concerning which dispute has arisen."‡ The Fathers read this document at the opening of the council, as their authority for proceeding: and yet you say that they did not acknowledge our doctrine!

You do not notice the great Council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451, in which the presiding officers are thus stated: "Paschasius and Lucentius, most reverend bishops, and Boni-

\* Collat. i. p. 62. Col. Hard. Tom. III.

† προκαθημένης ἡμων της ομετέρας μακαριότητος.

‡ τῆς ομετέρας ἀιτήσεως τὸν πόθον ἐγνωκότες, ἐπενεύσαμεν ἵνα περὶ τῶν τειχών κεφαλαιῶν, εἰς ὧν Σητήσις ἀνεψύ, γινορείνης καγονικῆς συνόδου.

sace, a most religious priest, holding the place of the most holy and most beloved of God, Leo, Archbishop of ancient Rome."\* From these and other similar preambles and facts, it is evident that the right of presiding was most formally and solemnly acknowledged to belong to the Bishop of Rome, by the Fathers of the fifth synod; that it was unquestionably exercised in the fourth great Council of Chaledon, and the third General Council of Ephesus, by the legates of the Apostolic See; and that its exercise in the great Council of Nice is the only satisfactory means of accounting for the presidency of Osius, and rests on the best historical evidence that exists as to this particular fact.

You are careful to remark, with Gibert, that in the acts of the sixth General Council, which is the third of Constantinople, the emperor is said to have presided; but I should suppose that this canonist must have added something to qualify this statement, since the acts expressly and repeatedly place the two priests and the deacon of the Roman Church at the head of all the bishops, as "holding the place of the most blessed and holy Archbishop of ancient Rome," and these legates subscribe first, "as holding the place of the Universal Pope Agatho."<sup>t</sup> It was also worthy of notice, that Constantine Pogonatus subscribed after all the bishops, as having read and assented to the decrees. The kind of presidency ascribed to the emperor cannot be mistaken. He sat in a place of honour, surrounded by his officers, who are mentioned on the occasion; but the synod consisted of the bishops, and the acts accordingly make the distinction, and invariably place the Roman legates at their head. The emperor sat to witness the deliberations of the Fathers, and to encourage them by his favour and protection; but the representatives of the Chief Bishop were the presidents of the synod, who directed and sanctioned its proceedings. The admission of the Empress Irene to preside at the eighth session

\* Conc. Chal. Pars. 2, p. 64. Tom. II. Hard. Col.

<sup>t</sup> τοι τότειν ιπίχαν Αγαθον τη μαρεγιατάτη και σκεψιτής πάτερ τόλμες Ρωμανος.

of the seventh General Council, must at once determine the expression to signify the mere honorary distinction of place; for the degradation of the Episcopal character was not then so complete that bishops should recognise in a woman the Head of the Church, and the fountain of Ecclesiastical authority. In this way also the Emperor Basil presided in the eighth council. If you turn to the records of these venerable assemblies, you will find the authority of the Apostolic See marked on almost every page, in characters not to be mistaken. The seventh General Council, which is the second of Nice, was opened,—“Peter, the most reverend Arch-Priest of the most holy Church of Rome, of the holy Apostle Peter, and Peter, the most reverend priest, monk and abbot of the monastery of St Sabbas at Rome, holding the place of the Apostolic See of the most holy Hadrian, Archbishop of ancient Rome;”\*—and its definitions were subscribed to by them before all others.† When their proceedings were drawing to a close, and the doctrinal decrees had already been made, the empress and her son signified their wish that the Fathers should assemble in their presence, which led to an adjournment from Nice to Constantinople. The most honourable place was occupied by her. She did not, however, preside with authority, but as an humble disciple of faith, she begged that the definition which had been made might be read in the hearing of her and of all the faithful.‡ The eighth General Council was opened,—“Donatus and Stephen, bishops most beloved of God, and Marinus, holding the place of Hadrian, the most holy and blessed Archbishop of ancient Rome.”§ The emperor was not present before the sixth session, when he is said to have presided, being seated on the right; but he is distinguished from the synod, which consisted of the bishops, with the papal legates at their head.||

\* Act. Conc. Tom. IV. p. 27. Hard. Col. Prima Actio.

† Ibid. p. 748.

‡ Ibid. Conc. Hard. p. 483.

§ Ibid. Tom. V. p. 764.

|| Ibid. P. 824. “Præidente eodem piissimo et amico Christi imperatore in dextera parte magni nominis templi magnæ ecclesiæ: conveniente sancta ac universalis synodo, id est Donato, etc.

The legates, as usual, subscribe before all others, as holding the place of the Sovereign Pontiff and Universal Pope;”\* but they specially limit the confirmation of the decrees to such as may be approved of by him:—“ Usque ad voluntatem ejusdem eximii præsulís.” Thus there is satisfactory evidence that the eight councils held in the East were convened, either at the request, or with the concurrence of the Pontiffs, who presided by their legates in the six which were OEcumenical. The right to convene and to preside was distinctly admitted to belong to the Pontiff by the other two, which originally were not of the same high authority. The Western councils offer the most incontrovertible proofs of the same rights, inasmuch as they were all solemnly convened by the Popes, who presided in most of them in person, in the rest by their legates. You assert, that even in the West “there were some instances totally subversive of our doctrine,” and you make special reference to the Councils of Pisa and Basle; but you should know that both these councils are of a questionable character, and that even in them the Primacy of the Roman Bishop was explicitly avowed. The Council of Pisa was convened by some cardinals, at a time when there were two claimants to the Pontifical chair; a case wherein Gibert, with other canonists, as you have stated, maintain the right of assembling without the summons of the Pontiff. The cardinals acted on that principle, but at the same time declared, in the most solemn terms, the divine institution and privileges of the Primacy. “Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Son of God,” say they in their letter to Gregory XII., “when about to ascend to his Father, not to leave without a Shepherd the flock redeemed by his blood, laid the foundations of his militant Church principally on blessed Peter; and in order that he might distribute his gifts throughout the whole body from him, as from the head, and might strengthen others in the Christian religion by the stability of his faith;—that by this one Head he might designate one origin, and one Church, which extends her branches through the

\* Conc. Hard. Tom. V. p. 922.

entire world with abundant fertility ; that thereby he might show to the successors of blessed Peter, and to the flock of the Lord, that there is one spouse of Christ, uncorrupt and chaste, guarding chastity with chaste modesty.”\* The Council of Basle was called by Pope Eugenius, and was opened under the presidency of Cardinal Julian, legate of the Apostolic See.† These councils, then, whatever may be thought of their authority, and whatever disputes were excited in the latter about the extent of Pontifical prerogative, afford no grounds for questioning the right of the Pope to convene general councils, and to preside in them, either in person or by his legates. As you are silent as to the confirmation of councils by the Pontiff, I have not introduced it into this discussion, though it is a still more splendid evidence of his spiritual supremacy. From the East, as well as from the West, their decrees were sent to Rome to receive the sanction of him whose office it is to confirm his brethren. “ We pray you,” say the Fathers of Chalcedon, in their synodical letter to Leo, “ to honour our judgment by your decrees, and as we have added the harmony of our assent to our head in what is good, so may your Holiness vouchsafe to supply to your children what is wanting.”‡ Privileges of this high character, voluntarily admitted by the assembled prelates of the whole Christian Church, in all ages, are no equivocal evidences of the Primacy.

\* Conc. Pisan. x. Litteræ Cardinalium ad Gregorium, Tom. VIII. Col. Hard. Col. 156.

† Conc. Bas. Ib. Col. 1106.

‡ Act. xvi. Conc Chalc.

## LETTER XIII.

### NICENE CANONS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

To determine the meaning of laws, it is doubtless of great importance to ascertain the occasion of their enactment. You charitably suppose that the attempts of the Bishop of Rome to extend his authority to the Asiatic and African churches, led the Fathers of Nice to enact the celebrated sixth canon, with a view to prescribe limits to his ambition. "Let the ancient customs," says the council, "be kept, which are in Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis, that the bishop of Alexandria may have general power over all these, as this is the custom also with the Bishop of Rome. In like manner, also, in Antioch and in the other provinces, let the privileges, dignities, and authority of the churches be preserved."\* Were the object of the Fathers to restrain Roman power, they should surely have made some direct prohibition, as you yourself argue, in regard to the defini-

\* Coll. Hard. p. 432. This canon, as recited at Chalcedon, is translated by Clinch: "Let the immemorial usages prevail, which exist in Egypt; so that the bishop of Alexandria shall have general authority there, because such is the usage with the Bishop in Rome." *πειδὴν καὶ τὸ εὐ* *Παρὰ ΕΤΙΓΧΩΝ ΤΕΤΟ ΣΥΝΑΞεις 151.* Clinch justly observes, that "from the Greek it appears, first, that no confirmation was given at Nicea to the usage of the Church of Rome: that, on the contrary, the usage of Alexandria was confirmed, because it had the authority of Roman usage. Secondly, it is equally plain, that no boundaries are either marked, or alluded to, within which the Roman Bishop exercised that general authority which the Fathers had in view." See Letters on Church Government, by James Bernard Clinch, Esq., Barrister at Law, p. 271. Dublin, 1812.

tion of the Council of Florence, and not limited themselves to an incidental reference, which implies no restriction whatever. On the contrary, the reference is expressly made in confirmation of the usages and privileges of Alexandria, as conformable to the usage of the Roman Bishop, without the least indication of any undue exercise of authority by him.

The manifest object is to settle and maintain the rights of the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch throughout the districts immediately subject to them, as metropolitans, or as patriarchs, according to a more modern appellation. Hence the canon afterwards declares, that if any bishop be made without the consent of his metropolitan, he is not a bishop. History has, fortunately, recorded the true cause of this canon, which happens to be altogether different from that which you have imagined. We are informed by St Athanasius that Meletius, a bishop of Egypt, having been deposed by St Peter of Alexandria, formed a schism, and threw off all dependence on the bishop of that city. He even took on him to establish new churches as Episcopal within his intended province.\* In commanding then the ancient usages to be maintained, whereby Egypt, Lybia and Pentapolis were subjected to the bishop of Alexandria, the Fathers indirectly proscribed these schismatics.† Whether the words or object of this canon be considered, your inferences from it are unwarranted. You assert that it traces the origin of the power of the Roman Bishop to custom: but there is nothing in it to sustain this position. The Fathers decreed nothing about Rome: they defined not the limits or the origin of its authority; but they order the privileges of the bishop of Alexandria to be maintained, because it is customary also with the Bishop of Rome. The sequel shows that it was

\* Apol. 2. Athanas.

† Archbishop Potter admits that "this canon was enacted, upon a complaint of Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria, that the metropolitical rights of his See had been invaded by Meletius, the schismatical bishop of Lycopolis in Thebais, who had taken upon him to ordain bishops without Alexander's consent."—Church Government, p. 188. See also Theodoret, Hist., l. 1, c. ix.

the invasion of metropolitical rights by schismatic ordinations, not any aggression on the metropolitans by the Roman Bishop, that was sought to be guarded against. You thence, however, take occasion to argue against the Primacy, because the appointment or confirmation of bishops is one of the prerogatives exercised, at present, by the Holy See; but you make no allowance for difference of discipline adapted to diversity of circumstances. We freely admit that recourse was not then had from the remote parts of the Church,—from the provinces subject to the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch,—to the Bishop of Rome for his confirmation of Episcopal appointments. Each patriarch exercised within his limits ample jurisdiction\* in all things appertaining to the ordinary government and wants of the Church. This system was adapted to the times, and had the full sanction of the Holy See. Did these two great patriarchates still continue in their ancient splendour, there is no probability that any attempt would be made to innovate on this ancient order of things: but the Mussulman has long since overturned the chairs of Antioch and Alexandria; and the bishop of that See, which alone has been proof against all the powers of hell, is urged by the solicitude for all the churches, to provide them with pastors in a way best suited to their wants. The mode of the appointment of bishops is one of those matters of discipline which depend on positive legislation or concession, and which can vary according to the wisdom of the Church.

The commencement of this sixth canon of Nice, as recited in the Council of Ephesus, states that “the Roman Church always had the Primacy.” You take occasion, hence, to express your “sorrow at being obliged to notice one of those cases in which our writers have thought it expedient to make authority when they could find none.” It may assuage your grief to learn that the fraud is not quite so certain as you fancy. The authority of Quesnel, whom you seem to have taken for a devoted Catholic, is not sufficient to convince us that this portion or title of the canon is a forgery, and the surmises of the

\* *ibidem.*

Jansenist, on this point, must be tested by an appeal to evidence. In the fifteenth session of the great Council of Chalcedon, held in the year 451, a canon was passed, giving to the bishop of Constantinople the second place in the hierarchy, to the prejudice of the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch. In the subsequent session, the legates complained of this enactment, and read for the Fathers the special instructions which they had received from Pope Leo, to maintain the order approved of at Nice, and the dignity of the Apostolic See. By consent of the council the subject was re-opened for discussion, and permission given to read the documents that had reference to the case. Paschasinus, one of the legates, commenced by reading the sixth canon in these words: "The Church of Rome always has had\* the Primacy: but let Egypt observe that the bishop of Alexandria should hold general power there, because such is the usage of the Bishop of Rome, &c." If the assertion of the Primacy of the Roman Church, publicly made in the council by the legate, were unfounded,—if it was an addition to the original canon, surely the attempt would have met with instant exposure and vehement reprobation. But, perhaps, it was subsequently added to the acts of the Council of Chalcedon, with a view to sustain the Primacy. Why did not the bold interpolator add it rather to the collection of Nicene canons? Besides, the Primacy was fully acknowledged in the council by the judges, even whilst they persevered in the measure against which the legates had contended. "We consider," say they, "that the Primacy of all, and that the chief honour, according to the canons, should be preserved to the most beloved of God, Archbishop of ancient Rome."† There was, then, no need of foisting the passage into the text of the sixth canon; and the reference made by the judges to the canons is proof that their authority had been alleged. The legates entered their protest against the privileges granted to the bishop of Constantinople,

\* εχει habuit. Bishop Hopkins puts *habet*. Is this a different reading, or an attempt to make it appear that the Primacy was, at most, only by concession of the council? Act. 16, Conc. Chale. Col. 637.

† Ibidem, Col. 641.

until the Holy See should take such measures as might seem necessary.

I do not wish to dwell further on the authenticity of this passage, as the proofs of the Primacy are otherwise unquestionable and abundant. It is enough to have shown that there is strong ground to believe it to be authentic, and that there is no shadow of reason for supposing it to have been added to the text, from any wish or design to "make authority." As the right of appeal, of which you speak in your note, on the authority of Quesnel, will probably occur in our progress, I shall not notice, at present, the rash assertion of that writer, whose opposition to the Apostolic See is easily intelligible, when we recollect that one hundred and one Jansenistical propositions, extracted from his works, were condemned by that authority which he insidiously laboured to undermine.

Let me now ask you, if the rights and privileges of the Bishop of Rome were to be determined by the words of the Nicene canon, as it now reads, without that prefatory remark, would it be possible to ascertain what they are? If you were one of a numerous assembly anxious to put a barrier against Roman encroachments, would you content yourself with words so vague and indefinite? How then can you pretend that such was the view with which they were adopted? You ask: "why the Fathers did not put in some clause saving the rights and privileges of the Apostolic See?" I answer that they did in the terms recorded at Chalcedon. But, waiving this proof, I maintain that, having specified no limits to its power, and left wholly untouched its prerogatives, they showed sufficiently that its rights flowed from a higher source than Ecclesiastical legislation.

Your efforts to prove that whilst we claim infallible authority for the Nicene decrees, we do not observe them, will not make much impression on those who understand the wide difference that exists between authentic declarations of revealed truth, and laws appertaining to order and discipline. You hold, I presume, as an oracle of the Holy Ghost, the decree of the Apostolic Council, declaring the exemption of converted Gen-

tiles from the Mosaic observances; and yet, notwithstanding the prohibition of eating blood which accompanied it, you would scarcely scruple to violate the letter of the enactment.

The canon prescribing the holding of provincial councils twice in each year, though a wise and salutary enactment for that period, is no longer in force; and our present discipline limits the obligation to triennial councils. The severity of public penance has vanished with the decay of Christian fervour; but the Chief Bishop of the Church still exercises that indulgence which the twelfth canon leaves to the discretion of bishops in favour of the penitent. The discipline of not bending the knees on the Lord's day, and on the day of Pentecost, is retained in regard to certain prayers performed at other times on bended knees; though the more solemn acts of homage are now performed in that most humble posture. How you could seriously bring such things forward to disprove the infallibility of the Church, or the Primacy of the Pontiff, is to me surprising, especially as you know and feel the difference between doctrine and legislation.

You refer to the seventh canon, which confirms the ancient custom of giving special honour to the bishop of Jerusalem, without prejudice to the rights of the metropolitan; and you observe: "Here, as in the other canon (*the sixth*), we see the council referring to custom and ancient tradition, desirous to prevent encroachment, and altogether silent with respect to Rome." There was no occasion for reference to Rome in legislating on the relation between an Eastern bishop and his metropolitan. You could, with much greater plausibility, have expressed surprise at the silence observed with regard to the patriarch of Antioch, to whom the metropolitan bishop of Cæsarea, and the bishop of Jerusalem, were more immediately subject. The omission of all reference to the Roman bishop, is only remarkable whenever the general interests of religion, specially committed to his guardianship, are at stake: but on such occasions you find him a prominent character, preceding all his colleagues in the measures for maintaining truth and order, or adding to their decrees the weight of his high authority.

## LETTER XIV.

ST ATHANASIUS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

You assert "that the Fathers of the age in which the Council of Nice was held, did not attribute any infallibility to it," and, in proof of your assertion, you extract several passages from the works of the celebrated champion of its faith, Athanasius. "He defends," you say, "the council by Scripture and tradition, but never assumes the ground that its decisions were of equal force with Scripture, and dictated by the Holy Spirit." As there is some ambiguity in these last phrases, I should prefer saying,—that its decisions were made under the guidance, and with the special assistance, of the Holy Spirit. To defend the doctrines defined in a council by Scripture and tradition, is quite conformable to our principles and practice, because we claim for the Church no right to *invent* doctrines, but to *deliver* them as they came down from the commencement. When labouring to convince those who reject the Council of Trent, and refuse assent to the proofs of its authority, we also are accustomed to show from Scripture and tradition the several doctrines which have been revealed; nor do we urge solely, or principally, the argument derived from Church authority. In impugning the authority of councils, I am surprised that you should venture to appeal to a work of Athanasius, in which he most expressly maintains the authority of the Nicene Council, since in the very first passage which you have quoted, it is stated that its adversaries were "condemned by all," and that their murmurs against its decrees resembled those of the unbelieving Jews. Somewhat further on he says: "How is it possible, that they

should not be regarded as impious, if they even entertain the thought of contradicting so great and so *Œcuménical* a Council? Are they not to be esteemed as outlaws, if they blush not malignantly to assail those decrees justly passed against the Arian heresy?"\* The truth of the dogma which the Fathers defined is powerfully sustained by Athanasius, by numerous testimonies of Scripture which prove the divinity of Christ; and the adoption of the term "consubstantial," as expressive of this dogma, is vindicated, because, although new, and not found in the Scripture, the adoption of this term was rendered necessary by the artifices of the Arians, who contrived to conceal their heresy under other forms of speech more strictly scriptural. "Therefore," says Athanasius, "the synod, having well weighed the matter, justly declared him to be consubstantial, with a view to overthrow the malice of the heretics, and to show that he was different from creatures: and immediately after the decree, subjoined: 'The Holy Catholic Church anathematizes such as say that the Son of God came into existence, or was created, or is changeable, or is any created work, or came forth from a different substance.'"<sup>†</sup> I know not what stronger evidence need be given, that the Fathers conceived themselves to be the organ of the Catholic Church; infallible in expounding the Scripture and defining the doctrines of revelation, and that Athanasius sustained them in asserting that infallible authority. "In these words," he continues, "'that he is from the Father,' and 'that he is consubstantial' the Fathers wished peremptorily to eliminate the subtleties, that the Son was created, or made, or was changeable, or did not exist before he was born in the flesh. For whosoever entertains such sentiments, contradicts the synod: on the contrary, whosoever does not coincide in sentiment with Arius, ought necessarily know and think as the sy-

\* "Qui igitur fieri potest, ut non scelerati habendi sint, si tanto et tam *Œcuménico* Concilio vel contradicere cogitent? aut non pro legi-rupis existimandi, si malignis oculis non vereantur a decretis illis rite contra Arianicam hæresim factis obtrectare!" S. Athanas. de. Syn. Nic. p. 355. Edit. Basil, an. 1564.

† Ibidem, p. 367.

nod.”\* As he proceeds, he establishes that the doctrine which the council professed was that of the Fathers and illustrious writers of the preceding ages; and he thus addresses the Arians, with holy indignation, as modern Jews and disciples of Caiphas: “ All detest you, except the devil, the author of your revolt from Christ. He originally insinuated this impiety into your hearts, and now moves you to censure the council of the world,† for no other reason than because in that council, doctrines were not sanctioned favourable to your error, but those which were delivered from the commencement by those who themselves were eye witnesses, and ministers of the Word. For the faith which is sanctioned by the writings and decrees of the synod, is that of the whole Church.” In this style of defence is seen the most perfect harmony with our doctrine and our practice, so that you could not have brought forward a witness less likely to sustain you in the imaginary “ contrast” you have laboured to establish. Why you stated, so emphatically, from Athanasius, that the Fathers **WERE CONSTRAINED** to express in clearer words the divine dogma, I cannot conceive, except it were your intention to convey the idea, that the words contain an argument against the infallibility of the council, which, certainly, they do not. You are careful to remind us, that the followers of Eusebius of Nicomedia, and not the Church historian of Cæsarea, are spoken of by the saint, when he inveighs against the Eusebians; but suffer me also to remind you, that Eusebius of Cæsarea is specially stated by him to have rashly erred, and combatted the true doctrine, to which he afterwards gave a tardy and unwilling assent.‡

In a letter concerning the councils which the Arians proposed to hold at Rimini and Seleucia, Athanasius rejects the project, because the Council of Nice had already determined the controversy which it was their design to re-open; and on the authority of divine Scripture, and the constant faith of the

\* P. 367. *Ath. de Syn. Nic.*

† “ Nunc vobis author est ut orbis terrarum concilium vituperetis.”  
P. 373.

‡ S. Athanas. *de Syn. Nic.* p. 355.

Church, had anathematized with an irrevocable decree, the heresy of Arius.\* “ When treating of faith” he observes, “ they did not write: ‘ *it appears to us:*’ but, ‘ *the Catholic Church believes in this way,*’ and immediately the confession of faith was added, that they might show that it was not a new opinion, but Apostolic doctrine; and that what they wrote was not their invention, but the teaching of the Apostles. Now what just cause have they (*the Arians*) for holding their synods? If any new heresy has arisen subsequent to that of Arius, let them state what are the tenets, and who are the authors of the sect; but in the mean time, let them anathematize, in their writings, all heresies prior to their council, and amongst the rest, even the Arian sect, as the Fathers of Nice did; so that they may seem to have some plausible reason for their proceedings. But if such be not the case, and they can allege nothing of the kind, but speak rather because they are infected with the Arian heresy, and having been condemned, change their form daily; what use, I pray, is there in councils, since the Council of Nice is sufficient to prostrate the Arian and other heresies, which it condemned in conformity with sound faith?† . . . In vain, therefore, they run to and fro, pretending that they are asking for councils on account of the faith, since the Divine Scripture is more powerful than all.”‡ If you can infer, from this passage, that this illustrious doctor did not believe in the infallible authority of the Council of Nice, your powers of reasoning are of a different nature from those which have fallen to my lot. He objects to any re-opening of the cause on which that council had pronounced judgment, and maintains that a preliminary measure to any new synod must necessarily be, the pronouncing of anathema against the heresy which it anathematized. In adding, that the Scripture is more powerful than all, he speaks of it as expounded by the unerring

\* Ea causa fuit cur universus orbis in concilium coiret, ut hæresis quæ suppululaverat, anathemate percuteretur: quod et factum est. S. Athanas. de Synod. Arimini et Seleuciæ, p. 477.

† Quum Nicænum Concilium adversus Arianam ceterasque hæreses satis valeat, quas per sanam fidem condemnavit.” Ibid. ‡ Ibid.

authority of that council,\* and opposes it to the many discordant conventicles which the Arians held: “ I supposed,” says he, writing to Epictetus, bishop of Corinth, “ that the garrulity of all heresies that ever existed, was silenced by the Council of Nice: for the faith which there was delivered by the Fathers, in accordance with the Sacred Scriptures, and which was confirmed by their confessions, appeared to me well calculated and sufficiently powerful to overthrow all impiety, and to establish that piety and faith which are in Christ. For this reason, in the different councils which were celebrated throughout Gaul, and Spain, and at Rome, all who were in that assembly unanimously, and **UNDER THE IMPULSE OF THE ONE SPIRIT,**† struck with anathema those who shun the light, who even at present continue to conceal themselves, and cherish the opinions of Arius, namely, Auxentius of Milan, Ursacius, Valens and Gaius of Pannonia, because these usurped for their conventicles the names of synods, whereas no synod should be regarded in the Catholic Church except that of Nice alone,‡ which should be considered as the trophy of all heresies, and especially of that of Arius: nor is this wonderful, since this synod was assembled for the condemnation of that heresy particularly. With what audacity, then, do they institute disputes and questions, after the authority of so great a council?§” Athanasius maintains, that there can be no synod in the Catholic Church but that of Nice,—none, that does not harmonize with it in faith, as those of Gaul, Spain and Rome, which issued anathemas against its adversaries, being impelled by the same Spirit. He says elsewhere, that “ it is not lawful to seek any thing beyond the definition of the Nicene Council.”|| “ If they believed pro-

\* “ Verbum antem illud Domini per Ecumenicam Nicenæ Synodus in æternum mane.” Ad Episcopos in Africa, p. 520.

† *Unius Spiritus incitatu.*” Ad Epict. p. 73.

‡ “ Quum nulla sit in Catholica Ecclesia Synodus existimanda præter unicam Nicenam, quæ omnium hereticon profligatarum, ac in primis Arianæ trophyum habenda est.” Ibidem.

§ “ Quia igitur audacia fit, ut post tanti concilii autoritatem, disceptationes aut quæstiones instituant?”—Ad Epictetum, pp. 73, 74.

|| “ Nefas est quicquam ultra Nicenum Concilium requirere.”—Ad Antioch. P. 87.

perly, they would be contented with the Nicene faith, promulgated by a council of the entire world.”\* Yet you say, that he or the other Fathers of his age, did not attribute any infallibility to it, and did not regard its decrees of faith as made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit!

You conclude your chapter with an imaginary contrast between our doctrine and that of Athanasius. Allow me to show its harmony. He maintains, that the Nicene Council’s exposition of Scripture, and its declaration of Apostolic tradition, and of the faith of the Catholic Church, must be embraced; that its judgment must not be re-examined;—that its anathemas must be repeated by all the children of faith;—that the very terms which it consecrates to express divine doctrines must be adopted, even though they be not found in Scripture. All this we hold. We claim for an œcumical Council this authority in matters of faith, and no more: and we exhort you, as Athanasius exhorted those whom he addressed, to admit the same authority, and to admire the zeal of every council, truly œcumical, in the maintenance of divine truth, and its diligence in unfolding the ancient tenets.† You have some illustrious examples in your own communion. The celebrated defender of the Nicene faith, Bishop Bull of the English establishment, applied to the Council of Nice the promise of Christ to be with the apostolic ministry till the consummation of the world, and ascribed to its decisions all the weight which we are called upon to recognise in them: “If,” says he, “in a question of so vast importance as this, we can imagine that all the governors of the Church could fall into error so prodigiously, and deceive the people under them, how shall we be able to vindicate the veracity of our blessed Lord, promising to be with his Apostles, and in them with their successors to the end of the world? A promise which could not be true, seeing the Apostles were not to live so long, unless their successors be here comprehended in the persons of the

\* Contra Arianos orat. 1. p. 109.

† See end of letter de Syn. Nicæn. p. 376. Ed. Bas.

Apostles themselves :\*—Saywell, another divine of the Church of England, is still more explicit : “ We know well,” says this writer, “ that the Apostle foretold that heresies must come—‘ men will arise speaking perverse things.’ That may happen in many councils : but nothing of the kind can be said of councils truly Ecumenical, received and approved of by the Catholic Church. Nor is there any ground for objecting Scripture, and the tradition of the Church, to the tradition of an Ecumenical Council, generally received and approved of, for they teach the same, and harmoniously announce the Evangelical faith : nor is the testimony of the pastors spread throughout the world different from that which they give when gathered together in councils that are truly free. The same truth is contained in tradition, and is contained in Ecumenical Councils.—If the meaning of the Scripture and faith of the Church is matter of controversy, the pastors, being enlightened for this purpose by the illustration of the divine Spirit, bear testimony to the doctrine which has been transmitted, and to its true meaning.”†

To return from this digression, naturally suggested by the defence of the Nicene faith, for which Bishop Bull obtained such deserved celebrity, it is certain that Athanasius was still more unequivocal in his maintenance of the authority of the council. His regard for the prerogatives of the Holy See will be seen from his own statements of the efforts made against him at Rome. He relates that a synod, which had assembled at Alexandria, consisting of the bishops of Egypt, Thebais, Lybia, and Pentapolis, addressed a letter to all the bishops of the Catholic Church, to repel the calumnies with which he was loaded. Towards the end of it they observe that the Eusebians excited the Arians, though anathematized by the whole Church, and that they were incessant in their efforts to disseminate the heresy by every artifice. “ They cast the Church into schism ; they write in commendation of the

\* See Life of Dr John Bull, p. 236. Ed. Oxford, 1816.

† Saywell in præf. ad Edit. Epist. Launoi, Cantabrigiæ, an. 1659.

heresy, and vituperate the Church, as you may discover from their letter to the Bishop of the Romans, and perhaps to yourselves.”\* Athanasius, who copies this letter into his Second Apology, subjoins:—“The Egyptians, indeed, wrote thus to all, and to the Roman Bishop Julius. Moreover, even the Eusebians sent letters to Julius, and, in order to frighten us, called for a synod, and referred the judgment of the cause† to Julius himself, should he be pleased to undertake it. When, therefore, we had reached Rome, Julius immediately wrote to the Eusebians, by two of his priests, Elpidius and Philoxenus: but they, when they had heard of our presence at Rome, were greatly troubled, because, contrary to their expectation, I had gone to Rome.‡ Having declined, therefore, to undertake the journey, they devised sundry idle and vain pretences to excuse themselves, whilst, in reality, they were kept back by great fear, lest they should be convicted of the same crimes which Valens and Ursacius had confessed.§ Afterwards the priest, Viton, brought more than fifty bishops to the council, where our defence was admitted, and we were judged worthy of the communion, and agape,|| and great indignation was felt against the Eusebians, to whom they requested Julius to reply, as he had received letters from them. Julius accordingly wrote, and sent the letter by Count Gabianus.”

You pause, after this quotation, to direct our attention to some points which you conceive to be inconsistent with the doctrine of the Primacy. The use of the Latin term “*jusse-*

\* Apol. 2, p. 389.

† “Synodus jusserunt convocari, et ipsi Julio, si vellet, arbitrium causæ detulerunt.” The sequel will sustain the translation.

‡ “Quod contra spem eorum me Romam contulisse.”

§ These heretical bishops had acknowledged their unjust persecution of Athanasius, and sought from Julius reconciliation with the Church. They say that they embrace the communion of Athanasius, encouraged by the pardon which the Pope had vouchsafed to grant them for their past unjust hostility: “maxime quia tua in Deum pietas veniam, secundum genuinam suam probitatem, nostro errori impertiri dignata est.” See the document recorded by Athanasius. Apol. 2, p. 413.

|| The friendly banquet of Christian community and charity.

"runt," which you have translated "ordered," affords the occasion of your first remark, and the term "arbitrium," rendered by you "arbitration," is the subject also of observation. "The Eusebians," you say, as giving the meaning of the text of Athanasius, "sent letters to Julius, and in order to frighten us, ordered a council to be called, and referred the arbitration of the case to Julius himself, if he was willing." I shall not trouble the reader with any literary disquisition on the force of these terms, but refer him to the note ;\* and merely rest on the facts as attested by Athanasius, and by the early Church historians, Theodoret, Socrates, and Sozomen. It is manifest that the Eusebians could give no order to Julius, who certainly was not subject to their authority, and that they did not even seriously wish the council to be held. The facts are these: Athanasius, in the year 335, whilst Constantine was still alive, had been condemned and deposed by a council in Tyre, at which Flacillus, patriarch of Antioch, presided. Constantine banished him, under the influence of the Eusebians, but towards his death he relented, and his sons, after his demise, in compliance with his wishes, permitted Athanasius to return.—The Eusebians, mortified at his restoration, made every effort for his ruin, sent legates to Constance and Constans, and wrote against him to Julius, the Roman Pontiff. Without awaiting any act of the emperors or Pontiff, they held a council at Antioch in 341, and regarding the restoration of Athanasius as irregular, chose Gregory of Cappadocia, an Arian, to be bishop of Alexandria, and sent him with the prefect Philagrius, and a military escort, to take possession of the See. They had previously sent Martirius and Hesychius, two deacons, as deputies to Rome, who meeting there the deputies of Athanasius, and failing to sustain the charges, found themselves un-

\* "Jusserunt," sometimes means "ordered," but it admits great latitude of signification: "Dionysium velim salvere jubeas;" says Cicero: which may be translated: "Please present my compliments to Dionysius." *Arbitrium*, sometimes means supreme power: "Arbitrium urbis Romulus habet":—*Ocid.* "Romulus has the government of the city." In the text, it means "judgment."

der the necessity of calling for a trial,\* in order not utterly to abandon their cause. Julius accordingly called a council, in order to have a full investigation. In the mean time Athanasius arrived at Rome, having fled from the violence of the intruder Gregory and his partisans. The Pontiff sent legates to summon his accusers, and determined to institute inquiry into the crimes which they, or their partisans, had committed, and to punish them accordingly.† They detained the messengers, and in the end wrote an offensive letter, in which, however, they admitted “the pre-eminence of the Roman Church as avowed by all, as having been from the commencement the school of the Apostles and the metropolis of piety,”‡ but they complained of the intended re-opening of the cause of Athanasius in a new council. Notwithstanding their opposition, Julius proceeded to examine the cause of Athanasius in a council consisting of fifty prelates. The acts of the Council of Tyre, and of the committee of bishops who were appointed to examine the facts at Mareotis, where they were said to have occurred, were submitted, and judged to be irregular and unjust: and Athanasius was acquitted by the unanimous judgment of the Pope and his colleagues. They requested Julius to communicate by letter the result of their investigation, which he accordingly did in the admirable letter which has been preserved by Athanasius, and which unites mild persuasion with authoritative judgment.

Without cavilling on words, the complaint made by the Eusebians in their letter of the re-opening of the cause in a new council, shows that they had not *ordered*, or seriously asked

\* “Concilium indici postularunt, litterasque et ad Eusebianos, et Athanasium Alexandriam, quibus convocarentur mitti, ut coram omnibus justo judicio de causa cognosci posset: tum enim se de Athanasio probaturos esse, quod jam nequirent.—Epist. Julii, p. 391.

† “Certe fratres nostri Romæ anno superiori infensi prioribus eorum factis, quum nondum scelera ista accesserant, pro ultione sumenda conciliuin indici, celebrarique voluerunt.”—S. Athanas. ad Orthodox. P. 338.

‡ Φέρετ τινες γάρ πατέρι φιλοτομίαν την ἡμετέρων ἐκκλησιῶν ἐν τοῖς γραμματίν, αφολόγουν, ως ἀποστόλων φροντισήριον, καὶ ευσεβέας μητρόπολεις ἐξ ἀρχῆς γεγεννημένην. Sozomen. l. 3. Hist. Eccl. c. viii.

for a council, and that the demand made by their deputies was the last subterfuge, when they had failed to substantiate their charges in the less solemn discussion with the deputies of Athanasius.\* It is for this reason that they expressed themselves as willing to abide by the judgment of Julius, if he should please to undertake the investigation. They hoped that he would not; and when their offer was accepted, those who had sent them shrunk from the trial, and sought by every frivolous pretence to excuse their default. No order then was given by them for the holding of the council, and no order was given by the council to Julius. It was *his* decision; for to *him* the cause had been referred, and consequently those whom he had voluntarily associated with him in its cognizance, to give it a character of greater equity and solemnity, could not give him any *command* as to the procedure which he should adopt. They might counsel and suggest, but they could not order. It is spoken of as *his* judgment by the council subsequently held at Sardica. You say, that the Arians “referred the cause to the arbitrement of Julius, if he was willing,” and offered to make him “arbitrator.” I pity the cause whose advocate is obliged to avail himself of the ambiguity of a term or phrase. It is expressly called *a judgment* by the council just referred to, and it has all the qualities that constitute a real exercise of judicial authority. Complaints had been lodged with Julius against Athanasius, as with a judge and superior; and the exercise of his authority had been called for, before the alleged proposal for an arbitration: afterwards, the cause proceeded entirely against the will of the party in whose name the investigation had been demanded. This is manifestly the exercise of a supreme and independent judicial power, *not derived from the voluntary act* of the parties concerned. You assert that Julius claims in his letter no superior rights, and pronounces no official judgment. I beg you to observe, that he claims, distinctly, the right of summoning all the parties to his tri-

\* “Id enim eorum legati, quum se vinci animadverterent, postularunt.”—Athanas. ad vitam sol. agentes. p. 440.

bunal. At the head of the accusers was Flacillus, patriarch of Antioch:—the accused Athanasius was the patriarch of Alexandria, the highest dignitary after the Roman Bishop; and yet all were embraced within the jurisdiction of the Pontiff. As a proof of the innocence of Athanasius, Julius alleges that he freely presented himself in Rome, and a year and a half awaited the arrival of his accusers. He adds, that “by his presence, he put them all to shame, for he would not have presented himself for trial, were he not confident of his innocence, nor would he have spontaneously appeared, but called to trial by our letters, as we summoned you in writing.”\* After this, can you doubt that the judgment was official, and proceeded from a recognised tribunal? The details of the proceedings, as given in that letter, are such as constitute a trial. The accusations had been communicated in letters written by Eusebius and his adherents against Athanasius; the crimes were stated for which he had been condemned at Tyre, on the report made by a committee of bishops which sat at Mareotis; the records of that trial were presented by Martyrius and Hesychius on the part of the accusers; the leading accusers were absent by default; Athanasius was heard in his defence; a number of witnesses were examined, and the sentence of acquittal was pronounced on the double ground of irregularity in the proceedings, and falsehood in the accusations. At Mareotis the liberty of defence had been denied to Athanasius, and he and his witnesses had been excluded, whilst his accuser alone was heard: “This we know,” says the Pontiff, “not merely from his statement, but from the records of the acts brought by Martyrius and Hesychius; for on reading them, we found that Ischyras his accuser was present, but that Macarius and Athanasius were not present, and that the priests of Athanasius were not admitted, though they earnestly demanded it. Dearly beloved, if indeed that trial were

\* “Suaque præsentia pudefecit omnes: non enim judicio stetisset, nisi sui fiduciam habuisset, neque sponte, sed litteris nostris ad judicium vocatus comparuisset, quemadmodum vos per litteras citavimus.”—Julii, Ep. apud. Athanas. Ap. 2, p. 396.

carried on with sincerity, it was necessary that not only the accuser but the accused should be present.”\* You see, that the Pope had some idea of the regular forms of trial. He felt, likewise, that in virtue of his office, he could annul this irregular sentence, as he could, if Athanasius had been guilty, have condemned him. The merits of the case had been canvassed, no less than the mode of proceeding. It was proved from the very records of the former trial, that the chief accuser, Isehyras, was convicted of perjury by his own witnesses. “Since, then,” says Julius, “these things were brought forward, and so many witnesses appeared in behalf of Athanasius, and he made so just a defence—what was it becoming us to do?—Was it not our duty to proceed according to the Ecclesiastical canon? Should we not therefore abstain from condemning the man, and rather admit, and regard him as a bishop, as in truth he is?”† He complains severely of their proceedings whilst the cause was pending before his tribunal—the Eusebians having violently intruded Gregory into the See of Alexandria without awaiting the decision: “For in the first place,” continues the Pontiff, “to speak candidly, it was not right that, when we had issued letters for the celebration of a synod, any one should anticipate the judgment of the synod.”—He also intimates that the Eusebians themselves would have been put on trial, had they appeared; and states distinctly, that accusations had been formally presented against them, and accuses them of contumacy for neglecting to appear to stand their trial.‡

I believe these extracts will satisfy most readers, that, at that early period of the Church, the Bishop of Rome exercised real jurisdiction in the most important causes, in whatever part of the world the parties resided, or whatever rank they occupied in

\* “Oportebat autem, dilectissimi, siquidem sinceriter illud judicium agebatur, non solum accusatorem, sed et reum præsentem sisti.”—P. 394.

† “An non quod Ecclesiastici canonis est? hominemque proinde non condemnaremus, sed potius recipereimus?”—P. 395.

‡ “Alacrius a vobis et sine recusatione occurrentum fuit, ne qui hactenus infamia istorum scelerum laborant, contumacia non comprehendit in judicio, libellos contra se datos, videantur refellere non posse.”—*Ibid.*

the hierarchy. You acknowledge that the close of the letter indicates some advancement towards the Primacy ; but had you read the letter without undue bias, you would have found the exercise of that high authority marked in almost every line. Julius, indeed, complains that the Ecclesiastical canon has been violated ; but he speaks plainly, as the authoritative guardian of the canons. To him, as such, and as the divinely constituted ruler of the whole Church, not only Athanasius and Marcellus, "but also many other bishops from Thrace, Cælosyria, Phœnicia, Palestine,"\* came complaining of the wrongs which they had endured, and which had been inflicted on their respective churches. The plea that the Eusebians offered for filling the Sees of Athanasius and Marcellus, could not be put forward to palliate the violence by which these were driven away from their Sees.—"Suppose," says Julius, "that Athanasius and Marcellus, as you write, were removed from their Sees ;—what can you say of the others, who, as I have said, have come hither from various places, both priests and bishops ?—for they also affirm that they have been driven away, and that they have suffered similar outrages. O ! beloved, Ecclesiastical trials are no longer conducted in conformity with the Gospel, but with a view to exile or death. If, as you say, they were absolutely guilty, the trial should have been carried on according to the canon, and not in that way. You should have first written to us all, that so what is just might be decreed by all. For they who suffered these things were bishops, and not of an ordinary Church, but of one which the Apostles themselves had by their labour instructed in the faith. Why then have you neglected to write to us any thing, especially concerning the city of Alexandria ? do you not know that it is the custom to write first to us, that what is just may be hence determined ? Wherefore, if suspicion of that kind had fallen on the bishop there, it should have been reported to our Church. Now, after having done as they pleased, without informing us at all, they wish us to approve of their sentence of condemnation, in which we had

no share. Such are not the ordinances of Paul—such is not the teaching of the Fathers—but this is arrogance and innovation. I beseech you, hear me willingly: I write for the general advantage. I intimate to you what we have learned from the blessed Apostle Peter; nor would I write things which I am persuaded you know already, had not the transactions filled us with affliction.”—

All this does not convince you that Julius exercised the prerogatives of Chief Bishop. You observe, “here we see plainly a claim set up for the Church of Rome, to be first informed of what is amiss, that justice may be done;” but you add, that he contemplates the action of a council;—but of what council? Is it not of such of his colleagues as he might gather around him, to aid him to form a just and equitable judgment? Socrates, the Greek historian, explaining this claim, says, that “the Ecclesiastical canon forbids the churches to take any measures without the sanction of the Roman Bishop.\* “This giving information to the Church of Rome is,” you say, “put on the score of custom, and not one word is to be found that looks like a claim by divine right.” Custom is, indeed, alleged; the canons of the Church are likewise referred to; but that custom and those canons were conformable to the ordinances of Paul, and to the teaching of Peter, as the holy Pontiff is careful to observe. “There is here,” you say, “no personal authority for Julius himself.” It was to Julius himself, “*Julio ipsi*,” the reference was made: the sanction of the Roman Bishop, according to Socrates, was required. When, then, Julius speaks in the plural number, he modestly unites with himself his colleagues whom he was wont to associate with him in judgment.

The splendid evidence of the Primacy, afforded by these documents, is no wise affected by the sequel of the history of Athanasius. You say that the Council of Rome and the letter of Julius “produced no result,” because the Council of Sardica was subsequently summoned by the emperors, Constantius and

\* τὸ ἱερατικόν καίγονος θελούστος, μὴ δῆν πάρα γραμμή τῷ ἀποκόρων παραχρήσει τας ἱερατοῖς.—Socrates, l. 1. Eccl. Hist. c. 17.

Constans, on the same case. But the circumstances must be taken into consideration. Gregory, the intruded Arian, was in actual possession of the See of Alexandria: the Eusebian faction were powerful at the court of Constantius, and used every effort to prevent the execution of the decree of Julius. To give it effect, it was necessary that the civil power should concur, and that concurrence could not be hoped for, unless Constantius were undeceived. It was with this view that Julius urged the Catholic emperor Constans to prevail on Constantius, his Arian brother, to hold a council of the Eastern and Western bishops, that the facts of the case might be placed in a true light, and Athanasius put in possession of his See. Sozomen assures us of it,\* and Socrates tells us that the Eusebians ascribed to Julius the holding of the Sardican Council.† Athanasius tells us, “that it was summoned lest those who had been wrongfully treated should suffer further injury, or the aggressors should continue to inflict outrages.”‡

In enumerating the bishops who assembled in this council, you begin by Spain, although the inscription of the council is: “The Sacred Synod through the grace of God assembled at Sardica from Rome, Spain, Gaul,” &c.§ As you pass from the beginning to the end, observing, however, that mention was made by the Fathers “of the fruitless effort of Julius and his brethren in the Council of Rome” to terminate the troubles; it may be allowed me to give the precise words that have reference to it. The Fathers observe that the accusers of Athanasius, though present at Sardica, “did not dare appear in the council of the holy bishops: from which circumstance the justice of the judgment of our brother and fellow bishop Julius most clearly appeared, who passed sentence not with rashness, but

\* Sozomen, l. iii. Hist. c. x.

† Socrates, l. ii. Hist. c. xx.

‡ Athan. ad Solit. Vitam Agentes, p. 442.

§ Col. Conc. Hard. Tom. I. Col 656. This would scarcely be worth notice, did it not seem designedly done, as elsewhere the order observed by Eusebius, “Rome and Alexandria,” is reversed. These are trifles, but look badly.

after mature deliberation." Here you perceive that the sentence is wholly attributed to him, so that hence you may solve for yourself those difficulties which you have found in expressions that seem more directly to refer to the council in which he presided. In the letter of the Fathers of Sardica, to the Egyptian and African bishops, they mention the accusations preferred to Julius, Bishop of the Roman Church, against Athanasius,—the letters written to him by bishops of various places in his defence,—the summons issued to the Eusebians to appear, and their shrinking from the trial: whence they infer their guilt,—“because being summoned by our beloved fellow minister Julius, they did not present themselves for trial.”\* It is towards the end of this second letter that the passage is found which you have quoted as the conclusion of the preceding one. Your inferences from these documents are totally incorrect. The innocence of Athanasius was fully established by the judgment of Julius; but the violence of his enemies was not subdued, and the intruder, who was sustained by the civil power, was not ejected. Hence the Fathers of this council, in their first letter, implore the emperors not to suffer the public officers to pass sentence on clergymen, or to molest the brethren, but to leave every one at liberty to follow the Catholic and Apostolic faith, without being subject to the violence of persecution. They make known to him, likewise, that Gregory, the intruder into the See of Alexandria, is deposed. These things may explain how matters were settled at Sardica, if, indeed, the sentence of this venerable assembly had put an end to the sufferings of Athanasius, but his own writings give us melancholy proofs that heretical outrages were not even then repressed. The mention of Osius, in the first place, and then of Julius, by his priests, as subscribing the letters, on which you lay some stress, is not satisfactory evidence that Osius was not the chief legate of the Pontiff. Athanasius has not given us the actual subscriptions, but the names of those who subscribed, so that we do not know the peculiar

\* “*Judicio non steterunt.*”

title which Osius assumed : but we do know, from all the records of all councils, that the dignity of each See, rather than individual merit, determined the place of each bishop in the council, and the order of signatures. The inscription of the first letter states that the synod was gathered from Rome, Spain, and Gaul, which is no small indication that the first signers of the decrees were the representatives of Rome. The great importance justly ascribed, by Catholics and by Arians, to Osius, for his piety and zeal, could never make him, as bishop of a petty diocese in Spain, rank, in an assembly of bishops, above the other bishops of the Catholic world.

You have neglected to observe that the Fathers of this council bore the most splendid testimony to the privileges of the Primacy. Osius proposed, “ If any bishop be condemned in any cause, and thinks that his cause is good, and that a trial should again take place, if it meet your approbation, let us honour the memory of the holy Apostle Peter, and let those who investigated the case write to the Roman Bishop, and if he judge that a new trial be granted, let it be granted, and let him appoint judges. But if he judge that the cause is such that the proceedings should not be called in question, they shall be confirmed. Is this the will of all ? The synod answered, It is our will.”\* Gaudentius, a bishop, then proposed an amendment, that should an appeal be lodged to Rome, no bishop should be ordained in place of the deposed prelate : which was agreed to. These canons were adopted by the council, and report was made of the whole proceedings to Julius, the actual Bishop of Rome, in a synodical letter, in which the Fathers say : “ This will seem to be excellent and most suitable, if the priests of the Lord report to the head, that is, to the See of the Apostle Peter, from the several provinces.”†

\* Sardic. Conc. Can. iv. Tom. I. Cone. Hard. Col. 640.

† “ Hoc enim optimum et valde congruentissimum esse videbitur, si ad caput, id est, ad Petri Apostoli sedem, de singulis quibusque provinciis Domini referant Sacerdotes.” Ep. Synod. Sardic. Apud. Hard. Col. Conc. Tom. I. Col. 653.

This council was held a few years after that of Nice, Osius being present at both. Rome is recognised by the Fathers as the See of Peter, and the mode of proceeding in Ecclesiastical causes is regulated with a marked deference to its Bishop. It is acknowledged to be the head, and Julius is requested to admonish by his letters all bishops not to communicate with those whom the council had condemned. I leave you to reflect whether your cause is served by reference to this venerable assembly.

The “few other little matters” which you notice in connexion with Athanasius, might have been passed over without any detriment to your cause. The term “Pope” applied by Constantine to Athanasius, was given in ancient times to bishops in general, as being “Fathers” of the faithful; but “Pope of the Universal Church” was an appellation given exclusively to the Bishop of Rome, as early, at least, as the Council of Chalcedon. We do not rely on an ambiguous term for the Primacy, which we believe to have been divinely conferred on Peter. Custom, so arbitrary in the use of titles, has, for many ages, appropriated the term to the Father of Bishops; but authorities and facts prove that he has thereby gained no accession of prerogative.

The title of “bishop of the Catholic Church of Alexandria,” given somewhere to Athanasius, is perfectly correct, but long before, in the days of Cornelius and Cyprian, the Bishop of Rome was styled “Bishop of the Catholic Church.”\* It was unnecessary to qualify it by the mention of the particular Church of Rome, for though also truly styled Bishop of Rome, he possessed authority throughout the whole Catholic Church. The same style is still retained in all the solemn acts of the Church, and the addition of the term “Roman,” in popular use, neither limits nor changes the power of the Chief Bishop, or the cha-

\* Cornelium Episcopum Sanctissimam Catholice Ecclesiam, Ep. 46, Inter Cypr. p. 107. Tom. III. Ed. Wireeb. The penitent schismatics were obliged to acknowledge Cornelius by this title, which, I believe, is nowhere in antiquity applied to any one but the Roman Bishops. All other bishops receive it with the qualifying designation of their See.

racter of the Church. Athanasius was a Roman Catholic in the same sense as any bishop in communion with the Apostolic See at this day. High as was his station in the Church of God, pure as was his faith, ardent his zeal, unblemished his virtue, he did not refuse to stand at the tribunal of the successor of Peter, and await with humility his sentence. In this he had the example of those who had preceded him in the See of Alexandria, amongst whom he mentions Dionysius, who being accused to the Roman Pontiff of the same name, wrote to him to repel the charge, and satisfy him as to his orthodoxy.\*

You "find the terms in which Liberius and Rome are spoken of rather inconsistent with our doctrine." I find them perfectly consistent, and I thank you for directing attention to them. Speaking of the Arian persecutors, Athanasius says: "In the first place, they have not even spared Liberius, the Roman Bishop, being restrained by no consideration either of its being an Apostolic See, or of Rome being the metropolis of the Roman dominion; or that they themselves had styled him 'Apostolic' in their writings, but confounding all things together, they were equally forgetful of all, having no regard for anything but impiety alone." Allow me to continue the quotation: "For when he (*Constantius*) saw that Liberius was orthodox, and detested the Arian sect, and was eager to reclaim all from that heresy, impious men thought within themselves: If we succeed in gaining Liberius to our opinion, we shall shortly overcome all: they, therefore, propose the matter to the emperor; and he, hoping through Liberius to be able to gain all, sends to him a eunuch, of the name of Eusebius, with a letter and gifts, to allure him with the gifts and threaten him in the letter. The eunuch then having set out for Rome, first

\* Romam ascenderunt, ibique eum apud Dionysium ejusdem nominis Romanum præsulm accusaverunt." De Sent. Dionys. Alex. p. 345. Also de Syn. Nic. p. 371. Bishop Bull makes mention of "the Roman synod held under their bishop Dionysius, in the cause of Dionysius of Alexandria, who was accused by some of the Church of Pentapolis, of denying the consubstantiality of the Son of God."—Discourse IV. p. 189, vol. 2. Oxford Edit. 1816.

urged Liberius to subscribe against Athanasius, and communicate with the Arians, because the emperor desired it and commanded it absolutely; then, pointing to the gifts, he continued to persuade him, and taking Liberius by the hand, addressed him: Obey the king, and take these gifts. The Bishop, in reply, asked him how could this be done against Athanasius? how shall we condemn (said he) a man whom not one, but two synods, entirely acquitted of all guilt, and whom the Roman Church dismissed in peace? who would approve of our conduct, were we to condemn in his absence a man whom we treated with affection when present, and with whom we held communion? This is not the Ecclesiastical canon: nor the tradition which we received from our Fathers, and which they derived from the blessed and great Apostle Peter.\* I willingly leave to the reader to judge whether the incidental mention of the greatness of the seat of empire which Constantius should have respected, can detract from the testimony here borne to it as being an Apostolic See, preserving the tradition of the great Apostle Peter, and whose prelate was, on that account, styled "Apostolic," the gaining of whom was considered, by the enemies of faith, the conquest of all. The terms in which Osius is spoken of cannot refer to anything but great personal merit connected with the conspicuous part he had acted, and the high functions committed to him; for as bishop of Cordova, he could not be of great influence or rank: whilst those applied to Liberius, plainly regard his office as successor of Peter in the Apostolic See of Rome. How anxious the enemies of the Primacy are to find a rival, or a superior to the Roman Bishop!

You say, that "perhaps you ought not to close the extracts from Athanasius, without taking notice of the forgeries which have been palmed upon the world for some centuries under his name." You ought not to have wasted your valuable time with any document confessedly false, nor should you have insinuated that such forgeries were at any time thought necessary to sustain the rights of the Holy See. Candour would have

\* Athan. ad Vitam Solit. agentes, p. 451.

avowed that in documents of undoubted authenticity, expressions and passages are found which probably the contriver of that literary fraud had before him. The title of "Apostolic," which he uses, is, at least, as ancient as Tertullian—"Pope of the Universal Church" can be found at Chalcedon—"root and mother of churches" in Cyprian—"the head" in the synodical letter of the Fathers of Sardica. The letter of Pope Agatho, which was read and received with acclamation in the sixth council, as the voice of Peter, contains as strong language in regard to the providence that has watched over the Apostolic See, and seems to have been borrowed or imitated by the pseudo-Athanasius. Allow me to submit an extract from it. "For this is the rule of true faith which the Apostolic Church of Christ, this spiritual mother of your most tranquil empire (the Pontiff writes to Constantine Pogonatus) warmly held, and defended, both in prosperity and in adversity, which Church, through the grace of Almighty God, is shown to have strayed at no time from the path of Apostolic tradition, and never succumbed, perverted by the novelties of heretics; but as from the commencement of Christian faith it received from its founders, the princes of the Apostles of Christ, so it incorruptibly remains to the end, according to the promise of our Lord and Saviour himself, which he declared to the Prince of his Apostles, as in the Gospel, saying: 'Peter, Peter, lo! Satan hath sought to sift you as one sifteth wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail: and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren.' Let, then, your serene clemency consider that the Lord and Saviour of all, whose gift faith is, and who promised that the faith of Peter should not fail, charged him to confirm his brethren: and it is notorious to all that the Apostolic high priests, my predecessors, have always done so intrepidly."\* Having solemn and authentic documents of this kind, which attest not merely the claims of the Pontiff, but the conviction of a General Council, composed especially of oriental bishops, you may conceive that we easily dispense

\* Conc. Constant., iii. Act. iv. c. 1081. Col. Hard. Tom. III.

with any aid to be derived from a work falsely ascribed to Athanasius, or any other individual Father. Your reference to such a work exposes you to the suspicion of seeking to diminish the lustre of the evidence which dazzles and overwhelms you, by insinuating that forgery was a necessary means for sustaining our tenets. But forgery is not our besetting sin. A divine of the establishment, the celebrated antiquary, Dr Whittaker has made a humiliating acknowledgment on this subject: "FORGERY—I blush for the honour of Protestantism while I write it—seems to have been peculiar to the Reformed—I look in vain for one of these accursed outrages of imposition amongst the disciples of Popery."\*

\* See his words, quoted in the Dublin Review, No. 2, p. 545.

## LETTER XV.

### ST CYRIL OF JERUSALEM.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

ST CYRIL, who was bishop of Jerusalem about the middle of the fourth century, follows in your list of authorities. "The Lord," says he, "is merciful and prompt to pardon, but slow to avenge. Let no one, therefore, despair of his salvation. Peter, the highest and the prince of the Apostles, denied the Lord thrice in the presence of a vile handmaid, but being touched with compunction he wept bitterly."\* I am surprised that you translate the Greek terms as if a mere "foreman" or "leading preacher" were designated, and venture to assert that they do not warrant the Latin translation of the learned Touttée. It is painful to trouble the general reader with discussions of verbal criticism; but as you have endeavoured to destroy the force of these terms, it is proper to state distinctly that the former signifies, according to the use of the classical authors, and the explanations of lexicographers, "the highest," "the most eminent," "the first in power," "the greatest in dignity."† The second term designates "the foremost in battle," and in a secondary sense, "a prince" or "leader."‡ It is now easy to judge whether you, or Touttée, represent the author's meaning with greater exactness. As the same terms occur in the second passage, with some slight variation, the

\* S. Cyril, Hieros. c. 11, § 19. Ed. Paris, A. D. 1720, p. 31. Edit. Oxon. p. 32. Πέτρος ὁ κορυφιώτατος καὶ πρωτοπάτης τῶν ἀποστόλων.

† Herod. vi. 23, "the very highest, the most eminent."

‡ See Jones's Greek and English Lexicon, Dammii Lexicon Home-ricum, Hiderici, Schrevelii Lexic. Herod.

same observations may be applied to them. “Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and the supreme herald of the Church.”\* The term “preacher,” but feebly expresses the idea conveyed by the Greek word, which signifies rather the authoritative proclaimer of sovereign mandates, the chief organ of the Church. The use of the adjective in the positive degree in Greek, does not at all prove, as you allege, amplification on the part of the translator, because its meaning, in its simplest form, is—“placed on the top;” the substantive, itself, signifying “head,” or “summit;” and it is in the other passage applied to Peter in the superlative. I must refer you to the authors and to the dictionaries, as also to Milles, the Protestant editor of the Oxford edition of the works of this saint, who gives the same Latin translation of these words as Touttée.†

It may gratify some readers to know on what occasion these appellations were given to St Peter. It is in reference to the confession of the divinity of Christ, which he made when the Apostles were questioned whom they believed him to be: “All of them remaining silent,” says St Cyril, “for the doctrine was beyond the reach of man, Peter, THE PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES, AND THE SUPREME HERALD OF THE CHURCH, not following his own inventions, nor persuaded by human reasoning, but enlightened in his mind by the Father, says to him: ‘Thou art Christ,’ not simply this, but ‘the Son of the living God.’” It is easy to perceive that no allusion is made to his preaching, but to his office as prince of the Apostles, and the chief organ of the faith of the Church; so that your commentary,—“the preacher who took the lead, inasmuch as he preached the first sermon to the Jews,” is surely inadmissible.

Your third extract from St Cyril is found in the fourteenth discourse. The saint is engaged in proving the resurrection of the Saviour, and thus appeals to the witnesses of the fact:

\* Πέτρος ὁ πρωτοστάτης τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ πᾶς εὐχαριστίας κερύκευος κέρυξ. S. Cyril Hier. p. 150 Edit. Par. p. 136. Edit. Oxon. Cat. xi § 1.

† “Petrus princeps Apostolorum excellentissimus,” is the translation of Milles in the Oxford edition

“Peter, and John, and Thomas, and all the other Apostles.—Peter testifies it, who before, indeed, denied him, but having thrice confessed him, was ordered to feed his spiritual sheep.” These passages precede that which you have quoted, in which the saint exhorts the faithful, when disputing with the Jews, to show the excellence of the glory of the Saviour, by the greater privileges granted to the Apostles above Moses and the prophets : “Be not ashamed of thy Apostles,” he says to each Christian, “they are not inferior to Moses, nor second to the prophets, but they are as good as the good, and better than the good : for Elias was taken up into heaven ; but Peter has the keys of the kingdom of heaven, since he heard : ‘ whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.’ Elias was taken up only to heaven ; Paul to heaven and to paradise.” The sequel offers nothing to diminish the force of his assertion, that Peter was more privileged than Elias, though the prophet was snatched up in a fiery chariot ; for the Apostle received the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven—a sublimer gift—a more divine privilege. To him was given the commission to feed the spiritual sheep of Christ. —You say : “it is evident that, on the whole, the saint expresses himself more fully and warmly in favour of the privileges of Paul.” Let us not trifle about the length of sentences, or the beauty of expressions. He makes no comparison between the Apostles : but he ascribes to Peter special power and authority, which he does not ascribe to Paul, though he speaks of his raptures, his preaching, and his martyrdom.

Your fourth quotation takes us back to the sixth discourse, in which St Cyril relates the overthrow of Simon the Magician, effected by the prayers of Peter and Paul ; to render which credible, he refers to the power of the keys which Peter had received, and the rapture with which Paul had been favoured : “Let it not” says he, “appear wonderful, however wonderful it be in itself ; for Peter was he who carried around\* the

\* *περιπέπαυ*. This term expresses very strongly the habitual power and its exercise.

keys of heaven : nor is it surprising ; since Paul was he who was wrapt up into the third heaven and to paradise, and who heard ineffable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter." In this passage, every thing confirms the power which we ascribe to Peter.—But it is in the manner of introducing the narrative that you find room for objection. The saint states, that as the errors of Simon Magus were being spread, "a pair of good men, Peter and Paul, the prelates of the Church,"\* interposed, and checked their progress by the miraculous overthrow of their author. The application of the same term "prelates" to both Apostles indicates, you imagine, an equality of office and authority ; but the same style is observed by us in speaking and writing of these Apostles, though no one can suppose that we thereby exclude the Primacy of Peter. Both were prelates and princes of the Church ; Peter as supreme ruler, Paul with Apostolic power, but subordinate to Peter, who is peculiarly styled prince of the Apostles, a title which, I believe, you will never find given to Paul unless in conjunction with him.†

The inferences which you draw from these passages are strange indeed, and the assertions which are made to sustain them are equally surprising. "The strongest epithet applied to Peter—that of a president of the Church—is given to St Paul in connexion with him." Allow me to remind you of these much stronger epithets, no where given to the Apostle Paul :—"Peter the most eminent and the prince of the Apostles

\* ὁι τας ικανοτάτες προσώπου.

† It is nowise strange, as Bishop Hopkins appears to think, that the version should vary, where the original terms are different. *Προστάται* is correctly rendered "præsules," as this term is determined by general Ecclesiastical usage to signify "bishops" or "prelates," not *presidents*, as the bishop renders it. Milles presents the same variation: "Ecclesiæ præfecti." Neither interpreter could have meant to diminish the force of the term. *Πρεστάτης*, having an immediate reference to the other Apostles, has been properly rendered "princeps," prince, chieftain, or leader. It is painful to observe groundless charges of infidelity or corrupt design advanced or insinuated against interpreters, by those who, in their attempt to sustain them, lay themselves open to similar imputations.

—the supreme herald of the Church.” I cannot persuade myself of what you say every one knows, that these terms do not import jurisdiction. Never was there a more idle and pernicious abuse of words than if they were used to “signify simply a certain precedence among equals.” Power and authority were necessarily implied by them, and their signification was determined and confirmed by the often repeated declaration—that Peter received and carried about the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and that he was commissioned to feed the sheep of Christ. You state that “his having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, is compared with Paul’s being taken up into heaven.” I cannot discover a vestige of such a comparison. I see that the possession of the keys by Peter, and the raptures of Paul, are referred to with a view to prove that the Apostles of Jesus Christ were more privileged than the prophets of the ancient dispensation: but this implies no comparison between the power of Peter and the favours granted to Paul. The comparison lies between the Apostles and the prophets. In like manner the power of Peter and the raptures of Paul are alleged to render credible the fact, that the artifices of Simon Magus were defeated by both, and resulted in his miraculous overthrow; but no comparison is made between the Apostles themselves. The author’s silence as to the erection of the Roman bishopric by Peter, is no wise surprising, since he was engaged in pointing out the heresies regarding the Deity which had been broached by Simon Magus; and he merely digressed to relate the miracle that had marked his overthrow: so that this cannot have even the semblance of a negative argument, since his subject did not call for a second digression.

I regret you have rendered our investigation so tedious, by having recourse to reasoning of a purely negative kind, which, if it do not create confusion in the mind of most readers, will certainly make the study of this subject less interesting. However, I must glance at the passages you have adduced. “Christ,” says St Cyril, “is a High Priest, having a priesthood that passes not away,\* who neither began his priesthood in time, nor

\* *απαρχεῖτον.*

has a successor in his high-priesthood."\* Why is he silent about the vicegerency of the Pope?—Because he is engaged in instructing the Catechumens or Neophytes in the divine functions and character of Christ. You would have him unnecessarily digress, and speak of the organization of the hierarchy, and the powers left for the government of the Church. The Pope, you well know, does not claim to be successor of Christ, who, as he liveth for ever, has a perpetual priesthood, and is the Head over all the Church. The vicarial powers, which are exercised by his authority, are not inconsistent, as you acknowledge, with this sublime doctrine.

The saint, in his fifteenth discourse, deplores the schisms and scandals that already existed, and speaks of the still greater evils that will prevail in the days of antichrist: "The wars among the nations terrify me; the schisms of the churches terrify me; the mutual hatred amongst brethren terrifies me." Why, you ask, does he not point out the cause of the evils, departure from the See of Peter?—Because he was neither treating of the causes or remedies of the evils, but strengthening the catechumens against existing scandals, whilst he explained to them what Christ had predicted was to come to pass. The great cause of the evils at that time was not, however, departure from the See of Peter, but obstinacy in maintaining the impiety of Arius, and separating thereby flourishing churches from the Catholic communion.

The beautiful passage from the sixteenth chapter appears to you hardly reconcilable with our dogma. The saint invites the catechumens to consider the boundless influence of the Holy Spirit, whose graces and gifts are diffused in abundance over the countless multitude of the faithful throughout the whole world. After the enumeration of nations, he refers to the different classes of men: "See," says he, "in each nation the bishops, the priests, the deacons, the monks, the virgins, and the laity, and consider this great Ruler and Dispenser of Gifts,

\* Cat. x. § xiv. p. 143. Edit. Paris. § vii. Edit. Oxon. p. 131.

how throughout the world he gives to one indeed chastity, to another perpetual virginity, to another the love of poverty, to another the power of resisting adverse spirits." You look in vain for the Pope, whom you expect to find every where ; but, once more, you should remember that the saint is expatiating on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and not on the organization or powers of the hierarchy. He refers to the various classes, without specifying their relations, which had no connexion with his subject. Had he professed to describe the whole constitution of the Church, the rank and powers of its officers, you would no doubt have seen the Bishop of Rome at their head, as you find him in all monuments of antiquity that present a view of the hierarchy. Your comparison of the historian forgetting the king, in describing a monarchy, is not exact, since Cyril was not an historian, but an orator, and undertook no description of the Church.

That, in speaking of the communication of the Holy Ghost to the Apostles, when they were empowered to forgive sins, St Cyril should have given no intimation that Peter was constituted their head, is no matter of surprise, since it was not on that occasion the special power of governing the flock of Christ was conferred on this Apostle. It was when he was charged to feed the sheep, as the saint has elsewhere specified.

It was scarcely proper to introduce here the remarks of the translator of St Cyril, who, as you must admit, in observing that Jerusalem was the mother of all the churches, merely meant that the divine religion of Christ was first preached and established there, and did not at all call in question the right of the Roman Church to be called mother of all others, because most have been brought forth to Christ by Apostolic men whom she sent to preach the Gospel, and all are governed by her with maternal authority and affection. What end is attained by availing one's self of an ambiguous phrase, where the author's meaning is manifest?

In the seventeenth discourse, whence you cite the next testimony you bring from St Cyril, you complain that no intimation is given of the Primacy of Peter, yet you will find it thus

clearly and strongly expressed:—“In the same power of the Holy Ghost, Peter, also, the prince of the Apostles, and the key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven, cured Æneas, a palsied man, in the name of Christ, at Lydda, now called Diospolis.”

You have furnished your readers with some admirable extracts from the eighteenth discourse, wherein the article of the creed—“I believe in the Holy Catholic Church,”—is beautifully expounded. “Many things,” says the saint, “might be said of her, but we shall be brief. She is called Catholic, therefore, because she is diffused throughout the world, from one extremity to the other. And because she teaches in a Catholic manner, and without imperfection,<sup>†</sup> all the dogmas which should come to the knowledge of men, concerning visible and invisible things, heavenly and earthly. And because she subjects every class of men, the rulers as well as their subjects, the learned and unlearned, directing them to piety. And because universally curing and healing every species of sins, committed by the soul or body, she possesses in herself every kind of virtue, by whatever name it may be known, in works and words, and spiritual gifts of every kind.—She is also properly styled a Church, or convocation, on account of the calling and assembling of all in her. The Psalmist says: ‘I will confess to thee in the great Church: I will praise thee in the numerous people!’ Before, it was sung in the Psalms: ‘In the churches bless ye the Lord God from the fountains of Israel:’ but after the Jews fell from grace, in consequence of the snares laid for the Saviour, he instituted another society, formed of the Gentiles—our holy Christian Church: of which he said to Peter: ‘On this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’—Of this holy Catholic Church, Paul writes to Timothy: ‘that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and the ground of truth.’”

“But since the name of church is applied to different things,

\* P. 253. Edit. Ox.

<sup>†</sup> καθολικὴ καὶ ἀπόστολικη.

as it is written of the multitude in the theatre of the Ephesians : ‘ And saying these things he dismissed the Church’—and with justice and truth one might say, that the church of the wicked is the conventicles of heretics, to wit—Marcionites, Manicheans and the rest ; therefore, now faith has delivered to you most firmly this article—and in one holy Catholic Church, that you may shun the polluted conventicles of these men, and persevere throughout in the holy Catholic Church, in which you were regenerated. If, perchance, you travel abroad in cities, do not simply ask : where is the Lord’s house ? for even the various sects of the impious endeavour to call their caverns the houses of the Lord : nor ask simply : *where is the Church ? but where is the Catholic Church ?* for this is the proper name of the holy mother of us all, which truly is the spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.”\*

I would compliment but little the intellect of my readers were I to offer any comment on this text. You, however, cannot find in it any thing like our doctrine. What unbiassed man, who compares them, will hesitate to pronounce them one and the same ? The Pope is there, though you cannot see him, for on Peter, as on a rock, the saint declares that the Church is built. Strange infatuation ! You complain of not finding the privileges of Peter, where nothing warrants you to expect them, and you close your eyes on those characters of light in which they are recorded !

You add some passages from Cyril’s works to show the authority of Scriptures. With Cyril we venerate the oracles of God. With him we say :—“ we recognise salvation in Christ Jesus : Was Christ incarnate to no purpose ? the God-man whom the Scriptures declare. Are these doctrines fond inventions and sophisms of men ? Are not the divine Scriptures our salvation ? are not the predictions of the prophets ? Keep, then, this permanent deposit, and let no one shake your faith : believe that God became man.”†—Concerning the Holy Spirit we likewise hold what the Scriptures teach,

\* Catech. xviii. § 23, 25, 26.

† 12 Cat. p. 155. Edit. Oxon.

nor do we venture to search, with rash curiosity, into this mystery beyond what he has been pleased to reveal of himself. This is all that the saint states.

You might, Right Reverend Sir, have cried “alas!” for very different reasons than those which you subjoin in your affectionate appeal. Alas! for the prejudice that is not dissipated by the blaze of evidence presented by the sainted bishop of Jerusalem! But how could you venture to close your chapter with an insinuation against the memory of the illustrious doctor, St Thomas of Aquin? Because, in an age when the facilities of judging of the authenticity of works were not such as we possess, a passage was quoted by him from a work, which passed as genuine, you write as if it were a forgery, contrived, or sanctioned, by that venerated writer. I feel for the accuser of such a man.

## LETTER XVI.

ST HILARY OF POICTIERS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

FROM Jerusalem you transfer us to Gaul, to receive the depositions of St Hilary, bishop of Poictiers. In his treatise "*On the Trinity*," he addresses God the Father, declaring his belief in the divinity of the Son, and beautifully states the grounds of his faith by a reference to the authority of Moses, the Prophets, the Evangelists, and the Apostles Peter and Paul. Were he in error, he boldly says that his ruin should be laid to their charge. Of these he speaks in those terms : " Matthew, from a publican, chosen to be an Apostle ; John, through the familiarity of the Lord, made worthy of a revelation of heavenly mysteries ; and *after his confession of the mystery, blessed Simon, lying beneath, that the Church might be built on him,\* and receiving the keys of the kingdom of heaven* ; and all the others preaching by the Holy Spirit ; and the vessel of thy election, Paul, from a persecutor made an Apostle, living in the depth of the sea, a man raised to the third heaven, in paradise before martyrdom, the offering of perfect faith being accomplished in his martyrdom. By these I have been instructed in what I hold : with these doctrines I am unalterably imbued. And forgive me, O Almighty God, for adding, that in these doctrines I cannot improve, but I am able to die in their belief."†—You maintain that the words which refer to Peter, taken in connexion with the

\* *Ædificationi Ecclesiæ subjacens.*" Bishop Hopkins has rendered it: "Lying at the foundation of the Church."

† S. Hil. de Trin. l. vi. Tom. VIII. n. 20. Edit. Wirceb. p. 154.

rest, prove nothing for our doctrine ; but I cannot discover what they lose by that connexion. The saint, indeed, is not labouring to prove the prerogatives of Peter, but the divinity of Him whom Peter confessed to be the Son of the living God. Incidentally, however, he mentions that Peter was the foundation on which the Church was built,—for this surely is the force of the words,—and he declares that he received the keys of the kingdom of heaven. This proves clearly the intimate and important relation which Peter bears to the Church, and the high authority which he specially exercises ; and as the building must have at all times its foundation, the inference of the permanence of the power in the successors of Peter is too obvious to be fairly called in question. The strength of the proof is rather increased by the indirect manner of the reference to the powers of Peter, because it indicates that they were admitted facts.

In the address of Hilary to the Apostles, you appear to yourself to find a positive demonstration, that in the passage just alleged no peculiar power or prerogatives were ascribed to Peter. He thus apostrophises them : “ O holy and blessed men, who through the merit of your faith obtained the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and received the power of binding and loosing in heaven and on earth, you had seen so great prodigies, so worthy of God, performed by our Lord Jesus Christ.”\* This does not at all demonstrate the point in question, for in addressing a number of persons, one of whom possesses some peculiar power, whilst others have powers of a similar character, though with a certain subordination, it was most natural to use language common to all without any nice distinction. It is not in rhetorical apostrophes that you should expect the accurate distinctions of the schools. To all the Apostles Christ gave the power of binding and loosing :—to Peter, on account of the excellence of his faith, he gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whenever this Apostle is spoken of in particular, you will find this specially observed ; and if at any time the power of the keys

\* Hilar. de Trin. I. vi. Tom. VIII. p. 166. Ed. Wirc p. 118. Ed. Par  
s\*

is attributed to the others, it is without any derogation to the eminent mode in which it belongs to him. Although we strenuously maintain his Primacy, we are accustomed to speak of the exercise of the ministry by the most lowly of the priests, as of the exercise of the power of the keys. The use, then, of similar language does not detract from his high prerogative.

When speaking of the confession made by Peter, Hilary shows that it was extolled by the Saviour, as divinely revealed, because it was an acknowledgment, not merely of his being the Messiah, or the adopted Son of God, but that he is his true and eternal Son : “For praise,” says he, “was given to Peter, not merely on account of the confession of the honour (*due to Christ*), but on account of his acknowledgment of the mystery, because he confessed not merely Christ, but Christ the Son of God.\* The Father saying, ‘*This is my Son*,’ revealed to Peter, that he might say, ‘thou art the Son of God.’ On this rock of confession, therefore, the Church is built. This faith is the foundation of the Church: through this faith the gates of hell are powerless against her. This faith has the keys of the heavenly kingdom. What this faith binds or looses on earth, is bound and loosed in heaven. This faith is the gift of the Father’s revelation, not falsely to assert that Christ is a creature drawn forth from nothing, but to confess him to be the Son of God, according to his natural property. O ! impious frenzy of wretched folly, that does not understand the martyr of blessed old age and faith, the martyr Peter, for whom the Father was prayed, that his faith might not fail in temptation—who, having twice repeated the profession of the love God demanded of him, sighed, on being a third time interrogated, as if his love were doubtful and uncertain, thereby also meriting to hear thrice from the Lord, after being purified of his weaknesses by this threefold trial: ‘Feed my sheep:’—who, whilst all the other Apostles remained silent, understanding, in a manner beyond human infirmity, from the revelation of the Father, that he was the Son of God, merited pre-eminent glory by the confession of his faith ! To what necessity of interpreting his words are

\* S. Hil. de Trin. l. vi. p. 168.

we now brought? He confessed Christ to be the Son of God: but you (*Arian*), the lying priesthood of a new Apostolate, urge me to believe\* that Christ is a creature brought forth from nothing. What violence you offer to his glorious words! He confessed the Son of God: for this he is blessed. This is the revelation of the Father, this is the foundation of the Church, this is the security for eternity. Hence, he hast the keys of the kingdom of heaven—hence his judgments on earth are ratified in heaven. He learned by revelation the mystery hidden from ages—he spoke the faith—he declared the nature—he confessed the Son of God. Whoever, rather acknowledging him a creature, denies this, should first deny the Apostolate of Peter, his faith, blessedness, priesthood, martyrdom; and then let him understand that he is estranged from Christ, because Peter, confessing him to be the Son, merited these things. . . . Let there be a different faith, if there be different keys of heaven. Let there be a different faith, if there is to be another Church against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. Let there be another faith, if there will be another Apostolate, binding and loosing in heaven what it binds and looses on earth. Let there be another faith, if Christ shall be preached a different Son of God than he is. But if this faith only that confessed Christ to be the Son of God, merited in Peter the glory of all beatitudes, that which acknowledges him rather a creature from nothing, must necessarily be not the Church, nor of Christ, since it has not obtained the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and is contrary to the Apostolic faith and power.”†

I have been somewhat more diffuse than you, in my quotations from this Father, that the reader might have a full and correct view of his sentiments. You “find our witness de-

\* “Mihi ingeris.” The correct translation is here given. Bishop H. mistakes it for *casting out Christ*.

† “Hinc regni celorum habet claves.” Bishop Hopkins’s translation is surely not a faithful representation of the text: “hence, are the keys of the kingdom of heaven!” Why this?

† S. Hil. de Trin. l. vi. p. 169.

claring, that not Peter, but the faith which he confessed, was the foundation of the Church."—Point to the passage wherein it is said that Peter was NOT the foundation. It nowhere occurs. The object of St Hilary is to show that the Arian heresy had no part or share in the power of the keys, or the privileges granted to Peter, because it had not the faith which obtained for Peter these privileges. There is not the least effort to establish a distinction between Peter and the confession of faith which he made: but the Arians are confounded by being told, that, as they deny Christ to be the Son of the living God, they have no power of the keys, and are not inheritors of the promises made to the Church. Peter, then, confessing the divinity of Christ, is the foundation: his is the Apostolate, the acts whereof are confirmed in heaven: the Church connected with him is that against which the gates of hell cannot prevail: there can be no other faith, no other power, no other Church.

Your translation of the passage of St Hilary, wherein he speaks of the cure of the mother-in-law of Peter, and says that Peter is "the prince of the Apostolate,"\* appears to me inaccurate, and the earnestness with which you solicit attention to your remarks on the term "princeps," occasions some sur-

\* S. Hilar. in Matt. c. vii. "Primus credidit, et Apostolatus est princeps." Bishop Hopkins translates this passage—"he first believed, and is the beginning of the Apostolate." He maintains that "princeps" may be rendered "beginning," and that "prince" is only a secondary, or rather a third meaning, its primary signification being *first, original, primitive*. I shall not dispute with the bishop as to its primary meaning; but the learned will admit that its general acceptation is a *chief, or ruler*, and it is manifest that in most of the passages of the Fathers, it cannot receive any other explanation. Though "princeps mensis" means "the first month," I know no passage of sacred or profane authors, where "princeps" means *the beginning*. Perhaps the bishop had *principium* in his mind. He remarks, in a note, that a bishop is styled by Hilary "princeps ecclesiæ," which certainly does not mean *the beginning of the Church*, but "a prince of the Church," a governor, a ruler. Peter was "prince of the Apostolate," governing the others, that no schism might arise. All bishops may be called princes of the Church, because they are governors of portions of it; but one is set over all.

prise. I refer the reader to the note, and only remark, that if there were any ambiguity in the term, the many passages in the writings of this Father, in which he speaks of Peter, with holy enthusiasm, should have removed all doubt from your mind as to its meaning. In his commentary on the glorious confession of this Apostle, he observes : “ The confession of Peter obtained a suitable reward, because he saw the Son of God in the man. Blessed is he, who was praised for observing and seeing beyond what human eyes could see ;—not beholding what was of flesh and blood, but discerning the Son of God by the revelation of the heavenly *Father*; and who was judged worthy to be the first to recognise in Christ his divine nature. O thou foundation of the Church, happy in the new appellation which thou receivest ; O ! rock, worthy of that building which is to destroy the infernal laws, and the gates of hell, and all the bars of death ! O ! happy gate-keeper of heaven, to whose discretion the keys of the eternal porch are delivered, and whose judgment on earth is a prejudged authority in heaven, so that those things which are bound or loosed on earth, obtain in heaven a like condition and determination.”\*—The effort which you make to explain away the force of this passage, by referring it to the faith of Peter, as if this were elsewhere distinguished by the saint from Peter confessing Christ, needs no reply. Whoever does not wish to mistake the meaning of the author, can easily discover it.

You quote a passage in which Hilary says : “ This is to be considered in regard to Peter, that he preceded the others in faith : for when the others were ignorant, he was the first to answer : ‘ Thou art the Son of the living God.’ He was the first to reject the idea of his suffering, thinking it to be evil. He was the first to promise that he would die rather than deny Him. He was the first to refuse to have his feet washed. He also drew the sword against those who came to seize on the Lord.” To this quotation, you subjoin this remark : “ This passage is one

\* S. Hil. Comm. in Matt., c. xiv. p. 416. Wirc. Edit. p. 572. Par Edit.

of many which explain what the ancients meant by Peter's Primacy. But Hilary is not here engaged in explaining the Primacy, or the Scriptural texts by which it is sustained. He is speaking of the walking of Peter on the waters: and he certainly says nothing inconsistent with the Primacy,—nothing to weaken the force of those passages in which he expressly treats of the prerogatives of Peter. I need not trouble the reader with the passage from the commentary on the 118th Psalm, where the saint takes occasion to dwell on the answer of Peter to the cripple who sought alms: "Silver and gold I have not: but what I have, I give you: in the name of the Lord Jesus, I say to thee, arise." You think that St Hilary should have observed, that Peter, besides the power of miracles, had plenitude of power over the Apostles. Did the occasion demand any such reference?

In the commentary on the fifty-second Psalm,\* you find a passage in which, speaking of the Apostles, Hilary says that "they received the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The explanation already given of a similar expression, in the sixth Book on "The Trinity," will be found strictly applicable to this. He was not labouring to prove that they all had equal power; but since the Psalmist complains of the general corruption of men, and says, that there is none good—no, not one—Hilary inquires, "how then was Abel pleasing to God, Seth approved of, Isaac made heir, Enoch translated, Noe preserved, Melchisedech sanctified, Abraham chosen, Jacob made Israel, Job declared without blame, Moses the friend of God, Aaron his anointed, David a man according to the heart of God, the prophets spiritual men, and how did the Apostles receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven?"† Such a phrase could be correctly understood of the Apostolic College, even were that power vested in only one of them, because such ge-

\* Bishop Hopkins calls it fifty-first, because it is thus numbered in the Protestant Bible: but it is fifty-second in Hilary, as well as in our Vulgate; and in quotations accuracy of reference should always be observed.

† P. 243. Edit. Wirc. p. 706. Edit. Paris.

neral phrases applied to communities, or collections of men, are sufficiently verified if the power is lodged somewhere in the body. We cheerfully admit that all the Apostles had the power of the keys, inasmuch as that power is identified with the general functions of the Christian ministry, especially the authority to bind and loose: though we contend that the grant of that power to Peter individually, and by this peculiar emblem, proves the possession of it in an eminent degree, especially for the general government of the kingdom of Christ on earth.\*

The epithets "Master," or "Teacher of Nations," "Doctor of Nations," "Chosen Teacher of the Church of Christ," and any others applied by St Hilary, or the other Fathers, to St Paul, are given by us also to this great Apostle, without any detriment to the official prerogatives of Peter: nor are our proofs of the Primacy dependent on words of similar import. The terms which we allege in support of it, are such as denote superiority and power, and their meaning is determined by the circumstances in which they are used, and by clear and unequivocal testimonies and facts.

You offer us, in addition, some passages, which you say "exhibit clearly the polity of the Church, and the regard paid to councils in the days of Hilary." In his letter to the Arian emperor, Constantius, he complains of his banishment, occasioned by faction and false messengers of the council, who deceived the emperor.† Of what council? Of the Arian synod, held at Berry, in which Saturnine, the Arian bishop of Arles,

\* Archbishop Potter acknowledges the keys to be the emblem of supreme power: "Our blessed Lord, as the king of this household, who has the supreme power to admit and exclude whomsoever he pleaseth, is said to have the keys of David." He endeavours to extend this power to all bishops, though it was given especially to Peter. "The supreme power of the keys, that is, the authority of admitting and excluding, belongs to Christ, the King; but the same is exercised by his Apostles and their successors, whom he has appointed to govern the Church, as his stewards or vicegerents."—On Church Government, p. 300."

† Hil. l. 2. ad Constant. Aug.

prevailed against Hilary, precisely because he strenuously defended the Nicene faith.\* You say he refers the emperor to Scripture. Not certainly with a view to render questionable the doctrine defined at Nice, which his whole life was spent in sustaining. His abundant quotations from Scripture are all directed to this end. In vain would he have urged the authority of Nice to an Arian :—it was necessary to proceed at once to the cause in question, and show that nothing new had been introduced in that council, but that the ancient and divine doctrine was simply propounded. Yet he does not fail to observe, that those who reject that council are involved in uncertainty, and are daily coining new confessions of faith: “ Whilst,” says he, “ as there is but one God, and one Lord, and one baptism, so also there is but one faith,† we depart from that faith, which is the only one, and whilst many forms of faith are invented, the matter is brought to this, that none exists.”‡ He speaks here as if he were one of the composers of new creeds; but I need not tell you that it is a rhetorical communication of phrase, adopted to render less painful his poignant remarks. What he adds of the many jarring councils of his time, is evidently directed against the Arian conventicles, in which the power of the emperor was employed to induce the Catholic bishops to recede from the great symbol of Nice. Hence, in his first book, he speaks with applause of the conduct of Eusebius, bishop of Vercelles, who, in a council convened at Milan, through Arian influence, being called on to subscribe to the condemnation of Athanasius, would not suffer the measure to be at all entertained, until the faith of the bishops was manifested by their assent to the Nicene formulary, and thereby broke up the assembly.§ His appeal to the Scriptures in support of this faith, was very unlike that of modern sectarists:

\* See Hil. l. un. adv. Constant. § 2.

† “ Excedimus ab ea fide, quæ sola est.” Bishop Hopkins, or the translator whom he follows, has mistaken the verb, and translated, “ cut out.”

‡ S. Hil. ad Constant. Aug. l. ii. n 4. Tom. IX. Ed. Wirceb.

§ S. Hil. l. i. ad Constant. § 8, p. 5. Wirceb. ed.

"Remember, however," he says, "that there is none of the heretics who does not falsely allege, that the blasphemies which he preaches are according to the Scriptures. All of them speak Scripture, without regarding the sense of Scripture, and boast of faith, whilst they have no faith. For the Scriptures do not consist in the reading, but the understanding, nor are they in prevarication, but in charity."<sup>\*</sup> This is what immediately precedes the last passage which you have adduced, and which, you would have your readers believe, contain a pledge on the part of Hilary, to confine himself to the Scriptures alone, with total disregard of the Nicene decree. You should have known that, like Athanasius, Hilary was the champion and the martyr of that definition. You deduce the total inefficiency of councils to command acquiescence or general assent, from the distractions of the Church, as stated by Hilary: but he drew a very different inference from the Arian intrigues and persecutions, which you call "the distractions of the Church." "The integrity," says he, "of this faith is commended by the authority of the Gospel, and the doctrine of the Apostles, and by the vain intrigues of heretics, murmuring on every side. For this foundation stands strong and immovable, against all winds, rains, torrents: it is not to be blown down by storms—it cannot be penetrated by rain—it cannot be washed away by floods: and that must be excellent, which, assailed by many, can be overthrown by none."<sup>†</sup>

May I add the observation of a learned bishop of the English establishment? "When Christ spake first particularly to St Peter, he sealed his speech with a powerful promise of perpetuity, saying: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"<sup>‡</sup>

\* S. Hil. l. ii. p. 11. ad Const.

† S. Hil. l. ii. de Trin. § 22, p. 45. Edit. Wircob.

‡ Bishop Pearson on the Creed. Art. ix. p. 515.

## LETTER XVII.

### ST BASIL THE GREAT.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

I pass with you to St Basil, bishop of Cæsarea, to whose works you assign the date A.D. 370. Your first quotation is from his second book against the Apologetic of Eunomius, in which he observes, that the names of individuals designate the distinction of their persons and qualities, but not the difference of their nature. He illustrates this remark, by referring to Peter, the mention of whose name immediately suggests to us his distinctive qualities : “ Immediately,” says he, “ on hearing this word, we understand Peter the son of Jonas, of Bethsaida, the brother of Andrew, who, from a fisherman, was called to the function of the apostolate ; who, on account of the excellence of his faith, received upon himself the edifice of the Church.”\* This passage clearly establishes the fact, that Peter is distinguished from all others, inasmuch as he was made the foundation of the Church, in reward of his divinely inspired confession. As his faith was eminent, so was his privilege peculiar.—“ We see here,” you say, “ the oft repeated fact, that Peter was the first foundation-stone in the building of the Church, because he was the first to acknowledge his Redeemer.” This, however, is not the reason assigned by the illustrious bishop of Cæsarea. He says, that “ on account of the excellence of his faith, he received on him the edifice of

\* S. Basil, contra Apol. Eun. lib. ii. Tom. I. p. 240. Edit. Bened. Paris, p. 322. Basil edit.

the Church.”\* He does not distinguish him as the first foundation-stone; but, with reference to the metaphor used by our Lord, he says, that he received the edifice on himself, as the foundation receives the material building. You think he should have said, that Peter was called to the *government* of the apostolate, had he received superior authority; but I need not tell you, that the highest ruler in the Church is but the minister of Christ.

The extract given by you from the liturgy bearing the name of Basil, in which prayer is offered for the bishop of Alexandria, and not for the Pope, offers no evidence against the Primacy. At Cæsarea the prayer must have been rather for the bishop of Antioch, to whose patriarchal authority it was subject. But the omission of prayer for the Pope is sufficiently accounted for by the use of the *diptychs*, or sacred tablets, on which the name of the reigning Pontiff was invariably inscribed, so that when Acacius, the heretic bishop of Constantinople, towards the close of the fifth century, presumed to cancel from them the name of Felix, who then held the chair of Peter, the act was regarded as the climax of impiety. Nicephorus, the Church historian, speaking of it on the authority of Basil of Cilicia, describes it as an act of frenzy.† The names even of the deceased Popes were preserved on these tablets, as is gathered from the letter of the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus to Pope Domnus, in which he states the wish of the patriarch of Constantinople to cancel from the diptychs the name of Pope Vitalian, on account of the dissensions that had arisen in regard to Monothelism. Yet though the memory of Honorius was clouded by the suspicion either of favour to the rising heresy, or negligence in suppressing it, still the patriarch him-

\* τὸν δια τὴν πίσταν ὑπεροχήν οὐ' εἰπούσης τὴν ὁμοδοκίην της εκκλησίας διέξαμενος. Adv. Eunom. lib. ii. Bishop Hopkins translates it: “because he stood before others in faith.” This neither expresses the text, nor the Latin version *sicut præstabat*.

† Nicephorus, l. xvi. c. 17. “Acacium usque adeo condemnationem eam non respexit, ut mente sensuque omni captus, primus ipse Papum nomen e sacro albo exemerit.”

self observed, that his name was retained through reverence for the Apostolic throne of ancient Rome.”\* The emperor resisted the attempt to cancel the name of Vitalian. In the canon of the mass, according to the Latin rite, there is no more than the simple mention of the name of the Pope, the priest praying for the Catholic Church, “together with thy servant our Pope Gregory,” so that this usage corresponds with that of the ancient diptychs. No argument, therefore, can be derived from the omission of a special prayer for the Pope in the liturgy of Basil. Neither is the prayer for the patriarch any evidence against the Primacy; because it became the faithful specially to pray for him to whom they were more immediately subject, and who was watching over them, “being to render an account to God for their souls.” The term, “Pope,” applied in the prayer to the patriarch, is conformable to ancient usage, which gave this title indiscriminately to the highest members of the hierarchy, and is, confessedly, no criterion whereby the authority of the person so named is to be determined. Where terms are ambiguous, or are variously used in different ages, the power of the officers to whom they are applied must be learned from other sources. All the learned agree that the Greek terms denoting “bishop” and “priest” were at first indiscriminately used; would you admit this to be a proof of an equality of power?

The long passage which you have given from St Basil’s preface to his moral treatise, styled “*On the Judgment of God*,” relates to the dissensions caused by the Anomæans, and other Arian heretics. You observe, that the original Greek signifies those “who were unlike each other;” but you know that the term was applied in a far different sense, to those Arians who denied that the Son was like in nature to the Father. When the saint speaks of such prelates as being in the Church of God, he must be understood of those who did not avow the

\* φασκόντες Οὐαριού μυημονέουσθαι ἐν τοῖς διπτύχοις διε τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ Θρόνου της πρεσβυτέρας Ρωμανοῦ. Ep. Const. in Actis. 6, Conc. Tom. III. Hard.

heretical sentiments which they secretly cherished; or he regards the Episcopal character which they had received, and the station which they occupied: whilst in reality, as he attests, "they cruelly strove to tear the Church in pieces, and they harassed the flock violently and atrociously, so that in them, doubtless, at that time the prediction of the Apostle was accomplished, this new heresy being cherished in their minds: 'Of your own selves men will arise speaking perverse things, to lead away disciples after them.'"<sup>\*</sup> All the evils which arose from the intrigues of the Arian bishops, he justly ascribes to their rejection of the Omnipotent King and God, Jesus Christ, and to the abandonment of his doctrine. This is the sum and substance of what he says, adding: "for I perceived that in any multitude, discipline and harmony are usually preserved, as long as all agree to obey the authority of one prince: and on the contrary, dissensions and discord, and a number of rulers arise, when there is no one who has supreme command: and this I perceived, even in a collection of bees, who, by an instinct of nature, follow their king:—If order of discipline and harmony are found in those who depend on the will of one, and obey one king, doubtless all disturbance, and all discord are proofs that there is no one to govern."<sup>†</sup> All this is intelligible enough to any one acquainted with the history of those times, and the actions and writings of this great doctor of the Church. The faith of the Church was one: all its bishops harmonized in maintaining the Nicene symbol: there was one ruler in it, governing in the name of Christ. But there were also many bishops secretly infected with Arianism, or notoriously avowing it, who were intruded into the places of Catholic prelates. They dissented from the faith of the Nicene Fathers, and they were at endless variance among themselves, seeking to disguise, from others, and from themselves, in a variety of ways, the heresy which they sustained, contrary to the Divine Scriptures, as expounded and declared at Nice. It

\* Proem De judicio Dei, p. 243. Edit. Col. p. 432 Edit. Basil.

† Ibid.

was embarrassing for a youth, or even for a man of mature age, to see this division among bishops; but Basil traced the evil to its source, and saw that it was the judgment of God on those who denied the Lord who bought them. Though in the passage in question no distinct reference is made to the council, or to the Pope, yet as the dogma itself was that which the council defined, and which the bishops in communion with the See of Peter defended, there is an implicit reference which the comparisons adduced by the saint strongly sustain.

His remarks, that he had been from his childhood instructed in the Scriptures, and that in the perplexity of his mind, occasioned by the dissensions which he witnessed, he adverted to the truth which he recognised in the divine writings, are quite in harmony with his known devotedness to the Nicene faith. When we, at this day, appeal to the Scriptures as affording manifest proofs of the Eucharistic mystery—when, amidst the wanderings of the mind, or the sophisms of unbelievers, we sustain ourselves by calling to our recollection the words of Jesus Christ,—we surely do not speak or think in any way inconsistent with our belief in the authority of the Pope, or of councils. The saint had not undertaken, here, to explain by what means revealed truth could be ascertained amidst the conflicts of opinion, or what authority had been left by Jesus Christ for the remedy of schism; but he meant to moralize, and to show how the judgments of God are provoked by that species of sin which is directed immediately against himself. In treating the subject, he makes, however, very intelligible reference to the authority which God has placed in the Church, and which all should obey.

“It is,” says Basil, “worthy of our attention, how great is the indignation which the Divine Scripture manifests against such as hearken not to the decree of the priest or judge. ‘He that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, or the judge who shall be in those days, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from the midst of Israel; and all the people hearing it shall fear, and they shall not afterwards do

impiously.' From which words we may easily understand how solicitous we should be, and how greatly we should fear. 'Bringing,' says the Apostle, 'into captivity, to the obedience of Christ, every understanding,' not this or that one: 'and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience.' " He refers subsequently to the punishment of Ananias, in regard of which he says: "What did Peter do, the executioner of so awful a judgment, the indignant minister of the decree of God against the author of the sin? THAT BLESSED ONE, WHO WAS PREFERRED TO THE OTHER DISCIPLES, and who alone received a testimony above all the others, and was pronounced blessed, rather than all the others, and TO WHOM THE KEYS OF THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM WERE ENTRUSTED."\* These passages, which are taken from the very work from which you have drawn your objection, prove that Basil acknowledged that Peter had received, in a special manner, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and the previous mention of the authority of the high priest under the old law, warrants the inference that he ascribed to Peter the right of definitive judgment. You will now, perhaps, be able to answer some of the questions which you have put to us; since you plainly see, that there is reference to the appointed and authoritative mode of terminating the divisions which the pride of man creates, by judging of the mysteries of faith, without regard to the teaching of that tribunal which Christ established. Were there no such tribunal, in vain would Basil have exhorted the faithful to be subject to the heavenly king, since men would still deny his divine attributes, however clearly they might appear to be marked in the Sacred Writings.

The letter of St Basil to St Athanasius, in which he entreats him to urge the bishops of the West to use their influence with the emperor Valens, does not make any special reference to the Bishop of Rome; but in all ecclesiastical concerns, especi-

\* P. 246, Edit. Colon. "Ille inquam beatus, qui et ceteris antelatus discipulis fuit, cuique magnificentius quam reliquis omnibus datum testimonium est, magisque quam reliqui omnes beatus appellatus, cui claves regni cœlestis commissæ."

ally of the Western church, he was always included, as will appear from another letter. The Arian emperor, however, was not likely to be moved by his individual authority, but rather by the great number of the bishops who might address him, which the saint aptly calls, “the authority of the multitude.”\* In a case of this kind, where the person to be addressed was an alien from the faith, it would be idle to urge the individual power of the Roman Bishop; but the remonstrances and petitions of many might prove efficacious.

When addressing Athanasius with a view to procure the extirpation of heresy, and the correction of scandals, by the immediate action of the proper ecclesiastical authority, Basil distinctly specifies the Bishop of Rome, who, though accustomed in matters of importance to act with the concurrence of his colleagues assembled in synod, radically possessed all the power necessary for the wants of the churches. “It appears to me proper,” says he, “that a letter should be written to the Bishop of Rome, that he may take into consideration what has here taken place, and decree;† and since it is difficult that any persons should be sent thence by a common and synodical decree, he, himself, using his authority in this case, may choose men able to support the fatigue of the journey, and also calculated, by the meekness and facility of their disposition, to correct those amongst us who are crooked and perverse; tempering their discourse aptly and providently, and bringing with them all the documents of what has been done for the necessary rescinding of the acts of Rimini.—Some there, also, desire, and, as we think, properly, that when they come they should express their execration of the heresy of Marcellus, as evil and pernicious, and opposed to sound faith.—And when those who may be sent shall arrive, with the divine blessing, let them not occasion schisms in the churches; but rather let them draw to unity by every means those who entertain the same sentiments,

\* Letter xlviii. p. 415. “Qui rerum potiuntur multitudinis autoritate permoveantur.”

† δέσποιντες γράψαντες.

although they may meet with some who may allege peculiar grounds of dissension; lest they separate the orthodox people from their prelates, and divide them into many parties. For care must be taken that all things must be sacrificed to peace: and especially that the church of Antioch be healed, lest in that sincere (*orthodox*) church a portion, becoming weak through personal attachments, be cut off."\* In this you cannot find a sentence to warrant our doctrine, though the saint solicits the exertion of the authority of the Bishop of Rome,† independently of any synod—an authority sufficient, in his mind, to heal the wounds of the patriarchal church of Antioch.

Basil gives a signal instance of the exercise of that authority which was admitted by an oriental synod, though the Fathers were conscious that the Pope had been deceived by the wiles of the heretical bishop, Eustathius, whose character he depicts in dark colours. This man having been deposed for heresy and other crimes in the synod of Melite, devised a plan for recovering his station, namely, to have recourse to the supreme authority of the Pontiff: "What was proposed to him," says Basil, "by the most blessed bishop Liberius, and what he consented to, we know not; but he brought back with him a letter directing that he should be restored, and having presented it to the synod at Tyana, he was replaced in his station."‡ This surely was a manifest recognition of the right of the Pontiff to rescind by his authority the judgment of the synod: since it was respected, though exercised on false information.

After so many testimonies and evidences of the authority of the Holy See, I scarcely need notice your attempt to derive an argument from expressions used by Basil in regard to Antioch, and other churches. In exciting the zeal of Athanasius to cause the Western bishops to aid in the settlement of the dissensions of Antioch, he dwells on the great importance of that See, and observes, that as a skilful physician attends, in the first

\* Epist. iii. ad Athan. p. 416.

† σύνοδος ἀνθετόσαι πατέρι τῷ πράγματι.

‡ Letter 74, p. 429.

instance, to the more dangerous disorders, affecting the principal parts, so should the cure of Antioch be first effected, that, like a sound head, it might impart health to the whole body. This might be said of that patriarchal See, which was the most important church then labouring under the malady of schism, by reason of the contentions of the friends of Eustathius and Meletius. When, however, he addresses the bishops of the West, he uses language which can only be applied to Damasus, their head, as well as the head of all the churches : "Since, then, the head cannot say to the feet I have no need of you, neither will you reject us."—After the statement of the desolation of the churches, he adds : "Think not that we speak thus with a view to teach you, or excite your diligence, for we know that you never forget us, no more than a mother forgets the children of her womb. Stretch forth your hands to the churches that are tossed by the storm, lest being entirely abandoned they suffer shipwreck. It was fit that many of us should hasten to your Reverence, and that each one should be the reporter of his own affairs and sufferings."\*

When addressing the clergy of the church of Nicopolis, he warns them, as you observe, not to indulge in strife with their mother, the church of Nicopolis, and calls this church a tender mother,—the nurse of piety; but who does not perceive the propriety of these terms, and that they involve no comparison with other churches? Each particular church is a mother to the clergy and faithful within her limits: each church that has sent forth Apostolic men to establish other churches may be styled mother in their regard: each church of higher dignity is a mother of the subordinate churches; but the Roman Church is the mother of all churches, by reason of her authority, and of that tender solicitude which Basil has so affectingly described.

You here introduce a rule of St Basil concerning the baptism administered by heretics, with a view to prove that he disregarded the authority of the Roman See. In his letter to

\* Ep. lxx, p. 670.

Amphilochius he states, that certain heretics, who did not use the invocation of the Trinity, should by all means be baptised, on coming to the Church. In this he is in perfect harmony with the decree of Pope Stephen, which regarded those who, in baptism, invoked the Trinity. He makes reference to the opinion of Cyprian and Firmilian, who rejected baptism administered by heretics, even though the rite were strictly observed; but adds, that since it appeared right to many Asiatic bishops that those baptized in the regular way should be received into the Church without a new baptism, through a motive of *economy* and *dispensation*,—by which he seems to mean prudential considerations connected with the harmony of the prelates, and peace of the Church,—let them be received. In this, likewise, he assents to the practice which Stephen had inculcated. With regard to the Eneratites he observes, that as nothing had been clearly determined in their regard, he thinks no account should be had of their baptism, for reasons peculiar to this sect: but in case a contrary usage somewhere prevailed, he does not insist on this, to the prejudice of harmony. This is the substance of the first canon, or rule, as given in the translation of Gentian Hervetus.\* In it there is nothing in direct opposition with the principle laid down by Stephen, as the whole question is reduced to the case of the Eneratites, on which special case no decree had emanated, and whose mode of baptizing may not have been ascertained with certainty. The version which you used must have given a different meaning.

The mode in which he speaks of the Council of Nice seems to you inconsistent with the high authority which we ascribe to a General Council. He says, indeed, that those who reject the term “consubstantial,” sanctioned by those Fathers, are censurable, though some may be, in some degree, excused on account of their not understanding it correctly, especially as they heard it fiercely assailed. You ask: “Did Basil think that the Nicene creed was inspired?”—Neither do we deem it

\* Edit. Col. p. 560.

such, in the sense in which inspiration is strictly applied to Scripture. He believed, as we do, that the dogma defined by the Fathers and declared in that creed, was a revealed truth, which they were divinely assisted to define, and to propound correctly. In this consisted their unerring authority. He believed them further empowered to express that dogma by a term which they should deem best calculated to meet all the cavillings of heretics, and to make its profession in that way a necessary condition of Church communion. This exercise of authority resulting from the governing power of the Church, and from the charge given her to guard the divine deposite of revelation, is closely connected with her right to define, and commands the respect of all her children. There may be circumstances, however, that extenuate, in some degree, the fault of those who, holding the doctrine in all sincerity of heart, might regret the adoption of a term which had become the subject of fierce disputation. This is all that the holy doctor teaches. Not only did he repeat the creed of Nice, with the anathema of the Catholic and Apostolic Church against those who deny Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, true God of true God, but he added, “according to this formulary we cling to the faith of the Church :”\* and he proved his faith by his sufferings, which he has so eloquently pourtrayed, in giving us the picture of the desolation caused by Arian impiety.

In the passage which you have quoted from his epistle to Cyriacus, you have a splendid evidence of his profound veneration for the formulary of faith adopted by the Nicene council. He exhorts the faithful at Tarsus to “profess the faith set forth by our fathers who formerly came together at Nice, and not to reject a word of it, but to be convinced that these three hundred and eighteen Fathers, who, without dissension, agreed on that formulary, had so spoken not without the assistance of the Holy Spirit.”† You understand by this, no more than the ordinary aid of divine grace whereby the faith is professed by any individual: because “no man can say: Lord

\* Ep. ix. Eccl. Antioch.

† P. 207. Par. ed.

Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost."\* But surely, there was no need of such solemn asseveration to prove that the Fathers had such aid as all receive. How vain are all the efforts of human ingenuity to evade the expressions of this illustrious doctor! He speaks evidently of an extraordinary light from above, such as that which authorized the first council to say : "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us :" he speaks of that special assistance which Jesus Christ promised the pastors of his Church, in the person of the Apostles, when he said : "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another paraclete, that he may abide with you for ever : the Spirit of truth ;" "he will teach you all things, and will bring to your mind all things whatsoever I shall have said to you."†—When he intimates that the explicit profession of the divinity of this Holy Spirit should follow the creed, he does not suppose any error, or neglect, on the part of the Nicene Fathers ; but the temerity of man having, subsequently to the holding of the council, assailed the divinity of the Holy Ghost, it was proper to give Him, in the most express manner, that homage which was already implied in the simple words of the symbol. These Fathers had added nothing to its meaning, when they declared the consubstantiality of the Son ; for from the commencement of the Church he was always believed and adored as the True God, as well as Saviour : nor did the faithful detract from their authority, when, to express their horror of a new blasphemy, they proclaimed aloud, that the Holy Spirit was no creature ; but the same God as the Father and the Son.

\* 1 Cor. xii. 3.

† John xiv. 16.

‡ John xiv. 26.

## LETTER XVIII.

ST GREGORY OF NAZIANZUM.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

THE intimate friendship that existed between St Basil and St Gregory of Nazianzum, has led you to subjoin the testimony of the latter to that of the eloquent bishop of Cæsarea. Your introductory passage is from his twenty-sixth discourse, in which he shows, that order is perceivable in all the works of creation, and in the human body in particular ;—in the Aaronic priesthood and in the Church ; whence he infers that all ought not to take on themselves to discuss the mysteries of faith, still less should they indulge a bitter and unrestrained spirit of contention. His remarks are pungent indeed : “ If we chance,” says he, “ to acquire trifling fame, or not even this oftentimes, but if we have got by heart two or three passages of Scripture, and these in a mutilated way, and without attention to their meaning—with this knowledge attained in a day, and like that of the tower-builders at Chalan (*Babel*), where the tongues were divided, we rise up senselessly in revolt against Moses, and we become contumelious and impious, like Dathan and Abiron, whose arrogance we should avoid, and not imitate their frenzy, lest we meet with their end. Do you wish that I should present you with another instance of order, one worthy of praise, and also worthy of being mentioned and seriously considered on the present occasion ? Do you see that among the disciples of Christ, all of whom were sublime and worthy of their election, one is called a rock, and is entrusted with the foundations of the Church ; another is loved more, and rests on the breast of Jesus ; and the others bear patiently the prefer-

ence."\* The use of the term "chiefest," in your translation of this passage, is liable to exception, as the original term, and its Latin version, is in the positive degree, and should be rendered "high" or sublime.† The obscurity of the phrase "receives in faith the foundation of the Church," is scarcely excusable, and still less your version given in the note—"believes in the foundation of the Church,"—this not being the meaning of the author, as may be seen below.‡ The object of St Gregory being to show, that there is order in all things, and that even among the Apostles—all of whom were elevated in dignity and power, and were worthy of their high calling—this order was established; so that Peter was a rock, and was specially entrusted with the foundation of the Church, whilst John received marks of special love, and the other Apostles witnessed and bore without jealousy the privileges and preference of the favoured two, we must infer, that Peter was specially invested with authority, as John was specially beloved. The whole scope of the discourse warrants this conclusion. When he asks, "where is austerity observable in the mode of acting of the Apostles? where lust of domination?" he only shows the meekness which marked their exercise of

\* S. Greg. Naz. 26. ed. Colon. an 1690.

† οὐφελαν.

‡ ὁ μὴ πίστη καλεῖται, ἡ τοις Θεμελίος της Εκκλησίας πιστεύεται. Bishop Hopkins reads τοις Θεμελίοις—but he must have mistaken the contracted for the ordinary Greek. This contraction appears in the Paris edition of 1630. In that of Cologne, 1690, there is no contraction. The edition of Basle, in 1550, and Schelstrate in his *Antiquities*, have the same reading, which is the only one which the context will bear. Bishop Hopkins says, that the original term does not warrant the Latin version. With great deference, I submit that it does, for "Ecclesiæ fundamenta in fidem suam recipiat," means, "he takes charge of the foundations of the Church," as may be seen by the use of the phrase *in fidem recipere*, in Cicero, and other classical authors. The Greek verb, which, in the active voice, means *to believe*, or *to give in charge*, in the middle and passive voices, joined with the accusative, means *to be charged* or *entrusted with*, as in 1 Cor. ix. 17, οἰχορομίζει πιστεύει: "a dispensation is committed unto me." See Diogenes Laertius, l. vii. c. 1. § 29, πιστεύεται την Πόργαμον βιβλιοθήκην: "being entrusted with the charge of the library in Pergamus."

§ περ τοις ευηνέσιοις ιτανδρα, περ δι πίλαρχος:

authority, and the submission with which it was embraced. In speaking of “Peter, John, and James, as being before the others, and being regarded as such,” he does not establish an equality between these three Apostles; but he mentions the peculiar favour shown them, and he specifies particularly, in regard to Peter, what that favour was, since he was styled the rock, and specially entrusted with founding and establishing the Church. Hence, he calls him elsewhere “the strength or support\* of the Church”—“the most honoured of the disciples.”†

When St Gregory, in speaking of the virtues of his departed father,‡ dwells on his faith, and on the glory that resulted to the church of Nazianzum, from his administration, no one can so far mistake his meaning, as to suppose that he is asserting any prerogative for that church. You state, that he styles “the church of Nazianzum a new Jerusalem, an ark borne on the waters,” and “as much as it was inferior to others in number, so much did it surpass them in celebrity, resembling, in this respect, Bethlehem, which, though a small city, was yet the metropolis of the world.” All this is true, but let the sentence be read entire, and its meaning will be manifest. “That great man of God, and truly worthy to be styled a theologian, entertaining these sentiments (*in regard to the Trinity*), and being moved by the Spirit concerning these things, what else can we say, than that, as that great Noe of old, the father of this new world, he caused this church to be called a new Jerusalem, and an ark borne on the waters? And this, because it manifestly rose above the deluge of souls, and the malicious attacks of heretics: and as much as it was inferior to others in the number (*of its children*), so much did it surpass them in celebrity; resembling, in this respect, Bethlehem, which, although a small city, was yet the metropolis of the world, being the nurse and mother of Christ, who made and overcame the

\* Πέτρον—τὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἄρεσμα. Apolog. ad Patrem. Orat. vii. p. 141.

† Πέτρος τὸ πιμιατάτῳ των μαθητῶν. P. 157. Orat. ix.

‡ St Gregory, the elder, was married before his baptism, and long after the birth of his son Gregory, was elevated to the priesthood.

world." I deem it quite unnecessary to give any explanation of this oratorical effusion, which, as every one sees, is not directed to set forth the authority of the church of Nazianzum, but the eminent virtues of its deceased pastor. The letter of the elder Gregory, to which you next refer, fully confirms what even this panegyric implies, that Nazianzum was a small flock —a Bethlehem, whose whole glory the piety of the son attributes to the distinguished zeal of the father. The archiepiscopal dignity of the church of Cæsarea, gave it far greater importance in the hierarchy, and hence the election of its bishop engaged all the solicitude of the venerable bishop of Nazianzum. He wrote to the people of that church during its vacancy, and recommended Basil as the fit person to be chosen for that See: "Care, indeed, must be taken," says he, "of every church, as of the body of Christ, but especially of yours, which was from the beginning, and now is, and is considered, the mother of almost all the churches, and to which the community† looks, as a circle inscribed around a centre, not only on account of its orthodoxy, proclaimed to all in times past, but also for the gift of harmony granted to it manifestly by God." I have made this translation literally from the original which now lies before me, because I find you avail yourself of the literary flourish of the ordinary version, to make it appear that Cæsarea was regarded as the centre of the whole Christian world.‡ No doubt all Christendom felt interested that the metropolis of Cappadocia should have an orthodox bishop; but the churches which were in its vicinity, and were subject to the authority of that See, which was the mother and foundress of almost all of them, felt most deeply this interest, since they were as the *radii* issuing forth from her, as from the centre. The saint never could have entertained the idea that a metropolitan church, subject to the patriarchal See of Antioch, should be

S. Greg. Naz. Orat. xix. p. 297. Edit. Col.

† της οὖτος βασιλείας, ἀπό κατάποντος περιγένεται. Ep. 22, ad Cæsar. P. 785. Edit. Col.

‡ "Ad quam tota Respublica Christiana oculos conjicit."

regarded as the mother of almost all churches of the universe, and the centre of the whole Christian commonwealth. Basil has beautifully declared which Church is the mother of all churches, when addressing the Roman Church in behalf of the See of Cæsarea, and the other Eastern churches, he so touchingly remarks, “that he is convinced she does not forget them, as the mother forgets not the children of her womb.”

The will of Gregory, who was afterwards transferred to the church of Constantinople, begins thus: “I, Gregory, bishop of the Catholic church, which is in the city of Constantinople, have consecrated all my property to the Catholic church at Nazianzum, for the service of the poor belonging to the said church.” You remark this phrase, in order to deprive us of the benefit which the numerous testimonies of the Fathers bring to the Catholic cause; but, I conceive, it refutes triumphantly a hackneyed objection of Protestants, that the phrase, “Roman Catholic Church,” is a solecism. Gregory speaks of the Catholic Church in a particular city, without destroying, by this limitation, or specification, its universal character as a portion of the orthodox Church spread throughout the world. With equal propriety we can speak of the Catholic Church of Rome, having reference to the principal See, with which all the churches communicate, without detracting any thing from its universal character or authority. It is to offer violence to the obvious meaning of their words, to suppose that the Fathers spoke of any other Church than that which alone is orthodox, and alone universal, “because,” as St Cyril of Jerusalem so forcibly remarks, “it teaches, without imperfection or diminution, all truth,” and because “it is spread throughout the world.” This passage sufficiently refutes your observation, that the Fathers—writing at the time when the world was said to be leagued against Athanasius,—did not mean, by Catholic faith, the faith which was then universal, but that which had been universal from the beginning. Notwithstanding the persecution which that champion of orthodoxy endured, and the apparent prevalence of Arianism, from the violent intrusion of Arians into many Sees, the faith was still Catholic, in the mean-

ing of Cyril and the other Fathers, because it was in reality spread throughout the world, and everywhere professed and taught by bishops in communion with the See of Peter. Hence, somewhat later, St Augustin confounded the Donatists by the very fact of their sect being confined to a corner of Africa—whilst the Church of Christ, according to the divine promises, is necessarily, in all ages from her first establishment, Catholic, spreading the splendour of one faith from the rising to the setting of the sun.

The distracted state of Christendom, which Gregory, in the funeral panegyric of Basil, so graphically describes, does not imply any diversity of faith in the Church itself. Through the violence of the Arian emperor, Valens, “bishops professing the orthodox faith were driven from the churches; others were intruded, professing the pestilential and destructive heresy supported by the emperor,”\* but one faith was common to all those who communicated with the Apostolic See of Peter, as Basil himself testifies. “We have not,” says he, “a different faith at Selencia, a different one at Constantinople, and a different one at Zelis, and a different one at Lampsacus, and a different one at Rome; and that formulary which is now used, is not different from the preceding, but one and the same.”† The calamities which afflicted the Church arose from imperial violence and Arian intrigue. There was no freedom, as you assert, claimed or exercised by any of the portions of the Church, to take any course different from that which the Nicene Fathers had pointed out, and which the See of Rome laboured to maintain. Gregory, and Basil, and all the illustrious bishops of that age, spent themselves, and suffered in defence of that faith: whilst false bishops yielded to the will of Cæsar, or employed his power to disturb the peace, and destroy, were it possible, the faith of the Church. The eloquent panegyrist aptly styles their faith, “the imperial pestilence.”‡ You may now under-

\* Orat. xx. p. 347. Edit. Col.

† S. Basil, Ep. 72, p. 671. Basil.

‡ *της βασιλικῆς απωλείας.* P. 342. Orat. xx. S. Greg. Naz.

stand how, notwithstanding the recognition by the Catholic world of the chieftancy of the Roman Bishop, and the belief of the doctrine expressed in the symbol of Nice, Christendom was still torn to pieces, and provinces were desolated which once had been the chosen vineyard of the Lord. A wild boar laid them waste. No Church authority could subdue the obstinacy of heresy leagued with the civil power.

The sentiments of Gregory in regard to the councils of his time, which you gather from his letter to Procopius, are not inconsistent with his known veneration for the definitions of faith made by an *Œcumene* Council. During the greater part of his public career, the violence and intrigues of the Arians had prevented any happy result from the various synods that had been convened; and though in the Council of Constantinople the error of Macedonius had been proscribed, yet even there the jealousies and contentions of some bishops had given the saint just cause of pain. Having resigned the government of that church, thus to remove every occasion of dissatisfaction, he did not wish to abandon his retreat, and in his advanced age take part in the proceedings of any such assembly. You pretend to discover his true sentiments in this letter, in which he declines to attend a council, and begs of Procopius to excuse him to the emperor, especially on account of his age and infirmity; as if you would insinuate that such a man did not always profess his real sentiments, and act in accordance with them. We need not examine the private letters of a Gregory, or a Basil, to discover their true sentiments, for throughout life both of them proved, that not even the frowns or threats of an emperor could intimidate them. When, then, they avowed their unreserved belief in the Nicene creed, they really venerated the definition of an *Œcumene* Council: and when Gregory, in the Council of Constantinople, united with his colleagues in anathematizing the heresy of Macedonius, he was firmly persuaded that God had charged the bishops of the church to guard the deposite of revelation, and that such doctrinal definitions as are the expression of the general faith, are pronounced under the influence of divine assistance. That

council was not indeed œcumical, but it was a large collection of oriental bishops, whose faith was known to accord with their Western colleagues; and its act was a measure adopted on the spot where the error was broached, and it assumed the character of a general definition, when the Western bishops with Damasus proclaimed their faith with similar solemnity. Gregory had never been in a council strictly œcumical; but had this last council been such, still he might have said with regard to the councils of his time in general, that he had never witnessed the happy termination of any of them. Such general expressions would not necessarily embrace every council without exception. But in regard to General Councils themselves, we are far from denying, that the members of them are liable to imperfection and sin. We claim for them only what is guaranteed by the divine promises, infallibility in their doctrinal decisions. When your author Gibert states that a General Council can neither sin, nor err, he does not certainly mean, that no sin can be committed by its members, even in their solemn deliberations. Men vested with the most sacred authority, and discharging the most solemn functions of a divine ministry, are still liable to the imperfections and weaknesses of humanity. There was much discussion, most probably attended with some fault, under the eyes of the Apostles themselves, in the first council: but the decree which went forth, determining the controversy, had the sanction of the Divine Spirit, whose assistance is granted to the tribunal of the Church, in virtue of the prayer of Christ, without regard to our unworthiness.

## LETTER XIX.

ST AMBROSE.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

FROM the East, desolated by Arian impiety and imperial persecution, we return to the West, to hear the testimony of Ambrose, the illustrious archbishop of Milan. The remarks by which you commence the examination of his sentiments sufficiently indicate how forcible is the testimony he renders to the Primacy of Peter and his successors in the Roman See. In his commentary on the fortieth Psalm, he says : “ This is that Peter to whom Christ said : ‘ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.’ THEREFORE, WHERE PETER IS, THERE IS THE CHURCH, there death is not, but life eternal : and therefore he added : ‘ and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it : and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ Blessed Peter, against whom the gate of hell did not prevail, and the gate of heaven was not closed : but, on the contrary, he destroyed the porches of hell, and laid open those of heaven : therefore, whilst on earth, he opened heaven, and shut hell.”\* Saint Ambrose wrote thus when refuting the Arians. He speaks of the question put by our Redeemer to his disciples as to what opinions were current among men concerning him. He observes the silence of Peter in this circumstance ; but he calls our attention to his promptitude in answering the question as to their own belief. “ This, therefore, is Peter, who answered rather than the other Apostles, yea, for the others, and he is therefore styled the foundation,

\* S. Ambros. in Psalm xl. enarr. § 30, p. 762. Ed. Paris. an. 1661.

because he knew how\* to preserve not only that which was his own, but also which was common to all. To him Christ gave his approbation; the Father revealed it: for he, who speaks of the true generation of the Father, learned it not from flesh, but from the Father. Faith, therefore, is the foundation of the Church: for it was not said of the flesh of Peter, but of his faith, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: but the confession overcame hell. And this confession does not exclude one heresy only: for since the Church, like a good ship, is lashed oftentimes by many waves, the foundation of the Church ought to prevail against all heresies. The day would close before I should have enumerated the names of the heretics and different sects: but against all of them that faith is general, that Christ is the Son of God, eternally proceeding from the Father, born in time of the Virgin."† When Ambrose says, that faith is the foundation of the Church, he speaks of that faith as professed by Peter, that is, of Peter professing the faith. He is, therefore, styled the foundation, in reward of his promptitude to confess Christ before the others, and in their name, because he showed his solicitude for their general welfare and happiness. The confession which he made of the divinity of Christ, was, indeed, the expression of his divinely inspired individual faith, but it was made by him in reply to a question that regarded all; nor did he give it in as his own particular faith. Thus he knew how to preserve the common interest, and was worthy to be made the foundation, and principal member of the Church. St Ambrose insists that the Church was not built on the flesh of Peter, but on his faith; because it was no mere natural quality that gained for him this prerogative, but his faith in the divinity of Christ, and this faith is ever to prove the bulwark of the Church against the endless varieties of heresy. As the saint wrote against the Arians, he

\* Hic est ergo Petrus, qui respondit *præ cæteris Apostolis*, imo pro *cæteris*, et ideo fundamentum dicitur, quia novit non solum proprium, sed etiam commune servare. Huic astipulatus est Christus, revelavit Pater.

† S. Ambros. de incarn. c. 4 and 5, p. 224. Tom. II. Edit. Basil.

particularly insisted on the necessity and efficacy of this divinely inspired belief. The text is obviously to be understood of the faith of Peter, not as distinct from him ; and numberless testimonies of Ambrose confirm this meaning. Thus, in his work on faith, he observes : “ That you may know that what he asks as man, he ordains by his divine power, you have in the Gospel what he said to Peter : ‘ I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail.’ ” And when Peter said before : ‘ Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,’ he answered : ‘ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ Could he not, therefore, strengthen the faith of him to whom he gave a kingdom of his own authority, and WHOM, IN CALLING A ROCK, HE MADE THE STRENGTH OF THE CHURCH ? Consider when it is that he prays—when it is that he commands. He prays when he is about to suffer ; he commands when he is believed to be the Son of God.”\* Peter, then, according to this holy doctor, is the rock of strength on which the Church rests : he has received a kingdom from Christ. Elsewhere he says :—“ In consequence of the solidity of his devotion, he is styled the rock of the Churches, as the Lord says : ‘ Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church :’ for he is called a rock, because he was the first to lay the foundations of faith among the nations, and like an immovable stone HE HOLDS TOGETHER THE STRUCTURE AND MASS OF THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN FABRIC.”†—Speaking of the cure of the lame man, he observes : “ We have said frequently, that he was called Peter by the Lord, as he says : ‘ Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.’ Since, therefore, Peter is the rock on which the Church is built, it is meet that in the first instance he should heal the feet. .... THE ROCK SUSTAINS AND RENDERS FIRM THE NATIONS LEST THEY FALL.”‡

\* S. Ambros. de Fide. l. iv. p. 99 Edit. Basil.

† “ Tamquam saxum immobile totius operis Christiani compagem molamq: contineat.” S. Ambros. Serm. 47, p. 356. Edit. Basil.

‡ Serm. 68, p. 361.

It is manifest that St Ambrose interpreted the texts of Scripture precisely as we interpret them, and recognised in Peter special powers and prerogatives not granted to the other Apostles of Christ. He was the rock,—the foundation,—the strength and support of the Church,—sustaining all the parts of the vast fabric, holding them together in unity, and imparting to them strength and durability. He received a kingdom from Christ,—that heavenly kingdom whose keys were entrusted to him. But you refer us to texts in which the saint exhorts every one to believe as Peter believed, that he also may be blessed, and asserts that whosoever overcomes the flesh, is a foundation of the Church.—Surely in this no more was intended than an exhortation to faith and piety, with the assurance that those who imitate the faith of Peter, will receive a divine blessing, and become serviceable to religion. Such as are familiar with the writings of the Fathers know, that it was their constant practice thus to take occasion from every fact, or sentence of Scripture, to moralize and to exhort. The saint most clearly intimates it in the very sentence itself: “Whosoever,” says he, “overcomes the flesh, is a foundation of the Church, and *if he cannot equal Peter, he can imitate him.*”\* It is in the same spirit that he continues in this paragraph to treat of the term “*rock.*” “Christ,” says he, “is a rock: ‘for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.’ He did not deny the favour of this appellation even to his disciple, that he may also be Peter, because from the rock he derives the solidity of constancy, and the firmness of faith.”† Thus far he retains the literal meaning of the text, and often and strongly inculcates it. Thence he takes occasion for exhortation. “Strive, then,” continues he, “that thou also may be a rock. Look not out of thee, but within thee, for the rock. Thy rock is thy action: thy rock is thy mind. On this rock let thy house be built, that it may not be lashed by the storms of the spirits of wickedness. Thy rock

\* S. Ambros. I. vi. Lue. c. ix. p. 88. Edit. Basil, anno 1538.

† Ibid. p. 89.

is faith—the foundation of the Church is faith. If thou art a rock, thou wilt be in the Church, because the Church is on the rock. If thou art in the Church, the gates of hell will not prevail against thee. The gates of hell are the gates of death: but the gates of death cannot be the gates of the Church. But what are the gates of death, that is, the gates of hell, unless the several sins? If thou art a fornicator, thou hast entered the gates of death: if thou hast violated thy faith, thou hast entered the gates of hell: if thou hast committed mortal sin, thou hast entered the gates of death.”\* You justly observe the correspondence of Origen and Ambrose in this strain of edifying, but mystic, interpretation. No interpreter of Scripture would venture to adopt it as the genuine and literal meaning; nor is there the least reason to believe that it was given as such by its ingenuous authors. St Ambrose, speaking of the name of rock as common to Christ and to Peter, says: “Some believed the Lord to be Elias, some Jeremias, some John the Baptist. Peter alone confesses him to be Christ, the Son of God. There are certain gradations of faith, and he who believes more devoutly, confesses more religiously. In consequence of this devotion it is said to Peter: ‘Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.’ His name then being Simon, he was called Peter on account of this devotion. We read in the Apostle of the Lord himself: ‘they drank of the Spiritual Rock, and the Rock was Christ.’ Justly, since Christ was a Rock, Simon was named Peter, that he who enjoyed the communion of faith with the Lord, might have, with the Lord also, the unity of the Lord’s name; that as the Christian is called from Christ, so also the Apostle Peter should derive his name from Christ the Rock.”† Peter, then, is a rock in a peculiar sense, made such in reward of his faith, and that he might be the strength and support of the whole Church. “Peter,” says he, elsewhere, “is therefore styled a rock for his devotion,

\* S. Ambros. l. vi. Luc. c. ix. p. 89. Edit. Basil, anno 1538.

† Ambr. Serm. 84. Tom. III. p. 383.

and the Lord is styled a Rock for his power, as the Apostle says; ‘they drank of the Spiritual Rock that followed them, and the Rock was Christ.’ He justly deserves the communication of the name, who is made worthy to partake of the work, for Peter in the same house laid the foundation. Peter plants, the Lord gives an increase, the Lord waters.”\* As for the passage wherein it is said, that “all the children of the Church are priests,”† as it has no connexion with our present investigation, I can only express my surprise at its unseasonable introduction. Besides, its explanation is immediately subjoined: “for we are anointed to the priesthood that we may offer ourselves spiritual victims to God.” Peter was a priest in a far sublimer sense; he was, as St Ambrose testifies, “Bishop of the Roman Church.”‡

The passage which you object from the commentary on the thirty-eighth Psalm, to be properly understood, must be read in connexion with the context of the place whence it is taken. The last verse of the Psalm reads thus, in our Vulgate translation:—“O forgive me, that I may be refreshed, before I go hence and be no more.” On these words St Ambrose writes—“Forgive me, that is, forgive me here where I have sinned. Unless you forgive me here, I shall not be able to find there the repose consequent on forgiveness: for what remains bound on earth, shall remain bound in heaven, what shall be loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Therefore, the Lord gave to his Apostles, what previously was reserved to his own judgment, the discretionary power§ of remitting sins, lest what should be speedily loosed should remain bound for a long time. Finally, hear what he says: ‘I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.’ To thee, he

\* S. Ambros. l. v. § 33. Edit. Par. p. 1364.

† Serm. 47, p. 336.

‡ S. Amb. de Sac. l. iii. c. 1, p. 374. Tom. IV. Edit. Basil.

§ Aequitatem.

says, I shall give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that thou mayst loose and bind. Novatian did not hear this, but the Church of God heard it: therefore, he is in his fallen state; we are in the way of forgiveness: he is in a state of impenitence; we, of grace. What is said to Peter, is said to the Apostles. We do not usurp the power, but we obey the command: lest, when the Lord shall afterwards come, and find those bound who should have been loosed, he be excited against the dispenser who kept the servants bound, whom the Lord had ordered to be loosed.”\* In this beautiful vindication of the power of forgiving sin, as exercised by the Catholic Church, there is nothing that destroys the distinction which Christ made in the powers of the Apostles. The saint quotes the words addressed to Peter, to prove that the Church, founded on Peter, has the power of forgiving sins. He observes that this power was not confined to Peter, Christ having spoken in like manner to all the Apostles. He does not say, that he spoke precisely the same words, or gave the same degree of power; but he says, that he gave to them, likewise, the power of forgiveness. He does not treat, here, of the governing power of the Church, as typified by the keys of the heavenly kingdom, which were peculiarly given to Peter, but of the power of forgiving sin, of binding and loosing, which was common to all. When speaking distinctly of the power of the keys, he ascribes it to Peter alone: “Peter, says he, who received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, went *up to the mountain*: John, to whom his mother is entrusted: James, also, who first ascended the Episcopal throne.”† The reception of the keys of the heavenly kingdom was consequently his characteristic, as it was the peculiar privilege of John to receive in his charge the mother of the Lord, and of James to govern with Episcopal authority the church of Jerusalem. You discover equality of privilege where “Peter, James, and John, and Barnabas” are

\* Enar. in Psalm xxxviii. p. 744. Edit. Par. an. 1662.

† S Ambros. Comm. in Lucam, l. vii. c. 9. p. 92. Tom. V. Ed. Col. See also in Psalm cxviii. Serm. 20.

styled pillars, as if this general expression determined the degree of authority with which they were respectively vested. And even when the saint calls Peter—"an eternal gate, against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail,"\* you imagine that his prerogative is destroyed by the application of the same symbolical expression to John and James, though he assigns a quite different reason, namely, the appellation of "sons of thunder," which was given them. It appears to me that a distinction, every where so strongly marked, manifestly denotes special prerogative.

When St Ambrose says, that "not only in Peter the one operation of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is found, but also the unity of the divine operation in all the Apostles is revealed, and a certain authority of the divine appointment;"† for the divine operation implies command, not service;‡ he does not at all speak of the degree in which the three divine persons wrought in Peter and in the other Apostles. He was engaged in proving that the operations of the Deity are common to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and he illustrated the principle by reference to Peter. As Paul was expressly set apart for the ministry by the Holy Ghost, and as he testified that the same who had wrought in Peter for those of the circumcision had wrought in him for the Gentiles, he shows that the Holy Spirit wrought in Peter. The operation of the Father is established by the testimony of Peter himself, who declares, that God chose that the nations should hear the Gospel from his lips: "Behold, therefore," St Ambrose remarks, "God wrought in Peter the grace of preaching: in which thing, since he was certainly chosen and assumed by Christ, who dares call in question the operation of Christ, since the Lord himself says: 'Feed my

\* S. Ambros. de fide, l. iv. c. 1. § 25. Tom. II. p. 96. Ed. Bas.

† "Quædam supernæ constitutionis autoritas." The term "constitutio;" is applied by St Ambrose to the appointment and establishment of the Apostles: "Nam si constitutionem separas et potestatem, quæ erat causa ut quos posuerat Apostolos Christus, poneret deus pater, ponaret et Spiritus Sanctus?"—S. Ambros. de Spir. S. I. ii. c. 12, p. 183. Tom. II. Ed. Bas.

‡ Ibidem.

lambs ?' 'The operation of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is, therefore, one.' " His object, then, is not to prove the *equality* of the Apostles, but the *unity* of the operation of the three divine persons ; so that whatever grace, or power, was communicated to the Apostles, should be ascribed to the Holy Ghost, equally as to the Father and the Son,—as " all the Apostles were not only disciples of Christ, but also ministers of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." I may admire the skill by which texts having no relation whatever to the subject in dispute are thrown together, because the words taken by themselves, apart from their context, appear favourable to your position ; but I cannot deem it the most effectual method of arriving at an author's meaning, or of conveying that meaning to others. You add, from the same work,—" Therefore, we behold unity of government,—unity of system,—unity of bounty." Of what government does the author speak ? You introduce him as if he was establishing equality of powers in the Apostolic government ; and yet he speaks not of them, but of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost concurring in the establishment of the Church ! I shall recite the passage, with its context, and leave the reader to judge of the fairness of your application of it. " The Spirit gives," says St Ambrose, " what the Father gives, what the Son also gives. Let us, then, understand more expressly what we touched upon before, that the Father and Son, and likewise the Holy Ghost, ordain the office, and establish the same persons. For Paul said : ' Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock in which the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops to rule the Church of God.' There is unity, then, of ordinance, unity of appointment, unity of communication.\* For if you separate the establishment and power, what reason was there that God the Father, and the Holy Ghost, should place those whom Christ had constituted Apostles ?"† The unity of command, of which he speaks, is the concurrence of the three Divine Persons in ordaining the office ;

\* " Unitas igitur imperii, unitas constitutionis, unitas largitatis."

| Ibid.

—the unity of appointment is their concurrence in constituting the individuals who are to discharge it,—the unity of communication is their concurrence in bestowing the graces whereby it is to be exercised.

It is in connexion with this that the saint proceeds to dwell on this unity of majesty in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which, he says, might be more aptly termed by a Greek word—*ταὐτότης*, or “identity,” which is not a mere union of affection, but is the very “substance of the Trinity.” “This,” he subjoins, “is the inheritance of Apostolic faith and devotion, which may be seen from their acts. Therefore did Paul and Barnabas obey the commands of the Holy Spirit: and all the Apostles obeyed, and immediately ordained those whom the Holy Spirit had ordered to be set apart: ‘Set apart for me,’ he says, ‘Paul and Barnabas.’” It is impossible, sir, that the text of St Ambrose could have been before you when you endeavoured to prove an equality of power among the Apostles, from a passage in which the author establishes only the identity in substance of the three divine persons, and the obedience yielded to the commands of the Holy Spirit by the Apostles.

The last passage you bring forward is the only one which appears to refer to the question at issue between us: yet it can easily be seen that the equality of Paul to Peter is asserted, not as to the power of office, but as to the merit of virtue; and this with a view to prove that the choice of the Holy Spirit was full of wisdom. “You see,” says Ambrose, “the command of Him who orders: consider the merit of those that minister. Paul believed; and, because he believed, he forsook the pursuits of a persecutor, and bore away the crown of justice. He who laid waste the churches believed; and, being converted to the faith, he preached in the spirit what the spirit commanded. The spirit anointed his champion, and having shaken off from him the dust of impiety, presented to the various assaults of the impious, an invincible conqueror of unbelievers, and, by divers sufferings, prepared him for the prize of the heavenly vocation in Christ Jesus. Barnabas also believed, and, because he believed, he obeyed. Therefore, being chosen by the com-

mand of the Holy Spirit, which is abundant evidence of the excellence of his merits, he was not unworthy of so great a college. For the same grace shone forth in those whom the same spirit had chosen. Nor was Paul inferior to Peter, **THOUGH THE ONE WAS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH**, and the other a wise architect, knowing how to establish the steps of the nations that believe. Paul, I say, was not unworthy of the college of the Apostles, since he also may be compared with **THE FIRST**, and was second to none: for he who does not acknowledge himself inferior, makes himself equal.”\* The meaning of the saint is obvious. He is careful to mark even here the distinguishing characteristic of Peter as *the foundation of the Church*, and *first* of the Apostles, whilst he supposes Paul equal in merit, and, on that account, to be compared even with the first.

• The pastoral and governing authority of Peter is clearly set forth by St Ambrose in many places, wherein he treats of the commission given to him by Christ to feed his sheep. In his forty-sixth sermon he observes: “ When he (Peter) was thrice questioned by the Lord: ‘ Simon, dost thou love me?’ He answered thrice: ‘ Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.’ The Lord says: ‘ Feed my sheep.’ This was thrice, which, being thrice said, served to compensate for his former fault, for he who had denied the Lord thrice, confesses him thrice, and as often as he had contracted guilt by his delinquency, he gains favour by his love. See, therefore, how profitable to Peter was his weeping! Before he wept, he fell; after he wept, he was chosen, and he who had been a prevaricator before his tears, after his tears was made Pastor, and he received the government of others, who before had not governed himself.”† In his commentary on the one hundred and eighteenth Psalm, he says: “ therefore did Christ commit to Peter to feed his flock, and do the will of the Lord, because he knew his love.”‡ In

\* S. Ambros. *I. de Sp. S.* § 158.

† S. Amb. *Serm. 46*, p. 335.

‡ *Serm. 13*, p. 516.

his commentary on Luke, he says of Peter: "He is afflicted, because he is questioned the third time: 'Dost thou love me?' But the Lord does not doubt; he interrogates him not to learn, but to teach him, whom, when about to be elevated to heaven, he left to us AS THE VICAR OF HIS LOVE. For thus you have: 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?' 'Thou knowest, Lord, that I love thee.' Jesus said to him: 'Feed my lambs.' And because he alone of all professes his love, HE IS PREFERRED TO ALL."\* Peter then was made pastor and governor, and vicar of Jesus Christ, to perform towards men the kind offices which the love of our Redeemer inspired, and HE WAS PREFERRED TO ALL in this pastoral office.

To these explicit and splendid testimonies of the superior authority of the Prince of the Apostles, you oppose what you conceive to be "a direct proof of the independence which Ambrose exercised with regard to the Church of Rome." The reader may ask, does it regard any defined doctrine?—or any general law?—or the communion with that Church? The answer must necessarily be negative. Not only did he firmly hold the symbol of faith, which, as he affirms, "the Roman Church always guards and preserves inviolate,"† but he even declares that he "follows the example and form of that Church in all things."‡ He conceived, however, that, without disrespect to its authority, he might retain a pious usage of the church of Milan, though not adopted in the Roman Church, namely, the washing of the feet of the neophytes, on their coming forth from the font, in commemoration of what our Lord performed at his Last Supper. In this he violated no law, but was sustained by the ancient usage of his church, which, in regard to religious rites, and other disciplinary matters, has the force of law. Besides, the rite naturally recalled to the mind of the neophyte the prayer of Peter, that not only his feet, but his hands and head should be cleansed; wherefore St Ambrose

\* S. Ambros. in Luc. l. 10, n. 175.

† L. i. Ep. 7, ad Siricium.

‡ "Cujus typum in omnibus sequimur et forinam."—L. iii. de sac. c. 1.

remarks: “ We follow the Apostle Peter himself: we adhere to the example of his devotion. What does the Roman Church say to this? Truly the Apostle Peter himself, who was Bishop of the Roman Church, is our authority for this assertion.”\* The saint shows his profound respect for the authority of that Church, of which Peter was Bishop, and says that it is his “ anxious desire to follow it in all things.”† You profess your willingness to be a “ Catholic of the primitive stamp, and ask no better rule than the example of the sainted Ambrose.”— Follow then his example: acknowledge Peter to have been the Bishop of the Romaa Church: cherish its communion; hold its faith, and endeavour to follow its example in all things.

The acts of the Council of Aquileia, which you present as evidence of the sentiments and practice of Ambrose, who took the leading part in its proceedings, are rejected as suppositions by the learned Chifflet; but as they are generally admitted by others, you are entitled to the full benefit to be derived from them. They do not, indeed, wear the usual form of the proceedings of councils, the obvious reason of which is, that they are the plain record of the trial intended to be presented to the emperors, who had called together the Fathers, at the solicitation of Palladius and Secundianus. This will explain to you an obscure sentence, the meaning of which you have evidently mistaken. After much informal discussion, during which many Arian blasphemies were uttered by Palladius and Secundianus, Ambrose proposed that the public notaries should take minutes of the proceedings, lest there should be any room for tergiversation.—“ We have,” said he, “ long enough treated of matters, without any record being made of our proceedings. Since such horrible blasphemies are uttered in our hearing by Palladius and Seeundianus, that it might appear incredible that they should have dared blaspheme so openly; lest they afterwards, by any cunning device, attempt to deny their expressions, though no doubt could be entertained of what the

\* L. iii. de sac. c. 1.

† “ In omnibus cupio sequi ecclesiam Romanam.—Ib.

venerable bishops here assembled would testify ;—yet since such is the good pleasure of all the bishops, let the proceedings be written down, that each one may not have it in his power to deny his assertions. You must, holy brethren, declare your will.” All the bishops cried out : “ It is our will.” Ambrose the bishop said : “ Our proceedings should be authorized by the reading of the imperial decree, that they may be alleged in evidence.” The deacon Sabinian read it. After the reading of it, Ambrose the bishop said : “ Behold what the Christian emperor has determined. He would not do an injury to the bishops : he appointed the bishops themselves to examine the case.”\* The cause proceeded, and the accused bishops were convicted of heresy, and deposed, and the result communicated to the emperors in a synodical epistle, that the imperial authority might prevent the heretical bishops retaining possession of their Sees. You represent this as “ an arbitrement, the authority for which was derived from the imperial decree.”† The proceedings show that the imperial summons and decree merely directed the attention of the bishops to the case, which, of right, belonged to the ecclesiastical tribunal ; bishops being the proper judges, and recognised as such by the emperor.‡—But the Pope, rather than the council, should have been called on to judge these two bishops of Mæsia, and yet, you observe, “ not one word occurs in the whole, recognising or alluding to the Pope of Rome.” According to more recent discipline it would be his exclusive prerogative. At that early period, however, the powers of councils were not so limited, though their acts were subject to be rescinded by the Pontiff, as was done by Julius in favor of Athanasius, who

\* Conc. Aquil. col. 825. Tom. I Conc. Col. Hardouin.

† “ Disceptationes nostræ ex re firmandæ sunt scripto imperiali ut allegentur.” Bishop Hopkins translates it: “ Our arbitrement upon this matter is to be confirmed by the imperial warrant, as it may be appointed.” This version is evidently wrong. Hardouin reads *discrepationes*.

‡ “ Noluit injuriam facere sacerdotibus: ipsos interpres constituit episcopos.”—C. 826.

had been deposed by the Council of Tyre. Possibly the new attempt of Ursicinus to disturb Damasus, the lawful Pope, may have been the reason why no mention is made of him in the record of the trial. It certainly was the occasion of a most splendid tribute to the supremacy of the Roman Church, given by the Fathers in a synodical letter addressed to the emperors, in which they are earnestly implored to guard the peace and rights of the Apostolic See : “ Your clemency should be entreated not to suffer the ROMAN CHURCH, WHICH IS THE HEAD OF THE WHOLE WORLD, and the sacred faith of the Apostles to be disturbed ; FOR THE VENERABLE RIGHTS OF COMMUNION FLOW THENCE TO ALL,”\* I leave you then to consider whether it was right to assert that “ not one word occurs in the whole, recognising or alluding to the Pope of Rome,” because he is not mentioned in the record of the trial, whilst so solemn a testimony is borne to his spiritual chieftancy in the synodical letter of the prelates. All your interrogatories are at once answered by this undeniable fact.

In another synod, held at Capua, at which Ambrose was present, the authority of the Bishop of Rome was distinctly recognised. Flavian, who claimed the patriarchal See of Antioch, had been called to Rome, to await the judgment of the Pope, but fearing the result, he excused himself on various pretexts. The right of the Roman Bishop to judge him was not controverted, but to obviate his objections, his cause was referred by the Council of Capua to the patriarch of Alexandria, on condition that he should report his proceedings and await the approbation of the Roman Pontiff. “ Truly,” said the Fathers in their letter to Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, which was composed by St. Ambrose, “ we judge that report should be made to our holy brother the Bishop of the Roman Church, since we presume that you will pass such a judgment as cannot displease even him. For in this way will the measure be efficacious, and peace and tranquillity will be

\* Conc. Aquil. Tom. I. col. Hard c. 837. He reads “ commonitionis :” The received reading is “ communionis.”

secured, if your determination be such as will not cause dissension in our communion, that the collection of our decrees being received, we may joyfully share the fruit of this investigation, when we shall know that what has been done is undoubtedly approved of by the Roman Church.”\* Thus, the supreme authority of that Church is most distinctly avowed. St. Ambrose, elsewhere, commends the inviolable integrity of its faith, and in his funeral oration on his brother Satyrus, he is careful to mark the caution with which, on reaching shore after shipwreck, he inquired whether the bishop of the place “agreed in faith with the Catholic bishops, that is, with the Roman Church.”† The agreement with that Church, spoken of by Irenæus, was, in the days of Ambrose, likewise, the criterion of orthodox faith.

\* S. Ambros. Ep. 78.

† “Percontatusq. ex eo est utrumnam cum episcopis catholicis, hoc est, cum ecclesia Romana conveniret.” De obitu fratris, p. 24, Tom. III. ed Basil.

## LETTER XX.

ST JEROME.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

In introducing to us the solitary of Bethlehem, you acknowledge that “it is not to be disputed that in drawing to the close of the fourth century, we find increasing proofs of the advancement of the claims of Roman supremacy towards the zenith of their maturity.” This, of course, cannot surprise those who have already learned from you that, even in the primitive age, under pagan and persecuting emperors, some of the best of men conceived the design of introducing into the Church this supremacy, in imitation of the imperial power, and fancied that they found in Scripture divine precepts to sustain their supposed innovation. Admitting your hypothesis, our astonishment should be, that the advancement was so gradual. The attentive reader has, I trust, already perceived that the belief of this power is coeval with the Church, and grounded on the divine writings;—that its exercise in all ages is manifest;—and that if the evidences accumulate, as we descend the stream of time, it is because the occasions of exerting it increased, and because the monuments of these latter ages are more numerous.

St Jerome, writing to Pope Damasus, professes, in the most solemn manner, his devoted attachment to the Apostolic chair of Peter. Having passed to the East, he found the church of Antioch disturbed by the adherents of three claimants of the patriarchate—Paulinus, Meletius, and Vitalis. A considerable controversy had arisen about the use of the term—“hypostasis,”—which by some was understood to indicate, “substance,”

or "nature," and by others, "subsistence," or "person;" so that, even among the orthodox, there was apparent division,—some affirming that there were three *hypostases* in the Deity, whilst others maintained that there was but one. At Antioch the profession of three hypostases was demanded as a condition of communion; and St Jerome, hesitating to adopt an ambiguous phrase, wrote to Damasus, to solicit the direction of his authority. You have given a long extract from this valuable document: "Since the East," says Jerome, "dashed together by the old frenzy of the people, tears piecemeal the seamless and well-hemmed coat of the Lord, and the foxes destroy the vineyard of Christ, so that among broken cisterns which hold no water, it is difficult to understand where the sealed fountain, the enclosed garden, may be found: therefore, I have thought it best for me to consult the chair of Peter, and the faith praised by the Apostle's mouth; asking at this time food for my soul from the same quarter, where formerly I received the garments of Christ. For the vast extent of water and land that lies between us, cannot keep me from seeking the pearl of price. Wherever the body is, there are the eagles gathered together. The patrimony being cast away by a perverse offspring, the heritage of the Fathers is preserved uncorrupted with you alone. There the ground with its prolific soil declares the purity of the Lord's seed, by the return of a hundred fold: here the grain, drowned in the furrows, degenerates into tares and straw. Now the sun of justice rises in the West: but in the East, that Lucifer, who had fallen, has placed his throne above the stars. You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth, you are vessels of gold and silver—here the vessels of earth and wood await the rod of iron and eternal fire. Notwithstanding, therefore, your greatness deters, yet your kindness invites me. With earnestness I ask a victim of salvation from the priest, the defence which the sheep requires from the shepherd. Let it not appear invidious: let the pomp of Roman majesty withdraw:—"I speak with the suc-

\* "Facessat invidia: Romani culminis recedat ambitio." This ad-

cessor of the fisherman, and a disciple of the cross. I, who follow none first except Christ, am united in communion to your holiness, that is, to the chair of Peter: on that rock I know that the Church is built. Whoever eats the lamb out of this house is profane. Whoever was not in Noe's ark must perish in the deluge. And because for my sins I have come to the wilderness which separates Syria from the confines of Barbary, and cannot always seek the body\* of the Lord from your holiness, through so great an intervening distance: therefore, I follow here your colleagues, the confessors of Egypt, and amidst the merchant vessels I lie hid in a little boat. I know nothing of Vitalis,—I reject Meletius;—I care not for Paulinus. *Whoever does not gather with you, scatters;* that is, whoever is not of Christ, is of Antichrist. For now,—O shame! after the Nicene faith, after the Alexandrine decree,—the West also concurring, the new phrase of three hypostases is exacted of me, a Roman, by the bishop of the Arians, and by the Campenses.† What Apostles, I pray, have put forth these terms? What new Paul, the teacher of nations, has taught these things?"‡

I am surprised that you should venture to assert, that this document has no reference whatever to the real question at issue. That question involves several points: whether Peter was constituted by Christ the head of his Church; whether the Bishop of Rome is his successor; and whether, as such, he is the teacher of all Christians, the pastor of the entire flock of Christ, the ruler of the whole Church. The testimony of Jerome bears on all these points. With him, the chair of Peter is "the rock on which the Church is built;—Damasus is "the

dress of an humble priest to the Chief Pontiff of the Church might seem bold. The saint excuses his boldness by adverting to the occupation of Peter. Erasmus remarks that by *inridia* he indicates "quod odiosum sit ad hunc modum interpellare Summum Pontificem."

\* Sanctum Domini. Erasmus understands *corpus Domini*. It might also mean, the oracle of the Lord.

† Those of Campas, a part of Cilicia.

‡ Hieronymus Damaso, f. 60. Tom. III. Edit. Bas. an. 1516.

successor of the fisherman;"—he is the pastor even of Jerome, who was then far distant from Rome, and in the district of the patriarch of Antioch: he is "placed on the summit of Roman power;"—he is the authoritative teacher, whom this most learned man desires to hear, and to whose decision he professes himself ready to yield most implicit obedience. Jerome's opinion was adverse to the use of the phrase of three hypostases; but it is thus submitted without reserve to the judgment of the First Pastor:—"I shall not fear to say three hypostases." It concludes with the most solemn appeal to his authority:—"I beseech your holiness, by Him who was crucified, the Saviour of the world, by the consubstantial Trinity, to give me authority in your letters to omit mention of three hypostases, or to declare them."\*

The second letter of the saint on the same subject, in consequence of the delay of Pope Damasus to answer, fully sustains the consequences which I have drawn from the former: "The Arian frenzy, supported by the powers of the world, rages on the one side. On the other, the Church being divided into three parties, each of them hastens to snatch me to their side. The ancient authority of the monks that live around here assails me. In the mean time I cry aloud: '*Whoever is united with the chair of Peter is mine.*' Meletius, Vitalis, and Paulinus say that they adhere to you. I could believe one asserting it: now two or all of them utter falsehood. Therefore, I beseech your holiness, by the cross of the Lord, by the necessary regard for the honour of our faith, by the passion of Christ, that as you succeed Apostles in dignity, you emulate their merit, and thus may you sit on a throne with the twelve in judgment: thus may another gird you as Peter in your old age:† thus may you obtain with Paul the citizenship of heaven, by signifying to me by your letter with whom I ought to communicate in Syria. Despise not a soul

\* Hier. Ep. f. 60. Tom. III. Bas. Ed.

† He prays that Damasus may be found worthy of martyrdom.

for which Christ died.”\*—Not only did Jerome cling to the chair of Peter, but the various chiefs of the parties into which the church of Antioch was split, claimed its communion; so universally was it recognised by all Catholics as the centre with which all should be united. As to Jerome himself, you, surely, cannot persuade yourself that he would have felt authorised to use such solemn adjurations in two successive letters, had he not believed that Damasus, *in virtue of his station*, was empowered by God to prescribe the terms by which the orthodox faith should be expressed, and to give or withhold his communion from bishops, according as their faith should appear to him sound, or liable to suspicion.

You ask the reader to turn to the letter to Evagrius, that he may have a better view of Jerome’s sentiments. The assertion of some one that deacons were above priests, was the occasion of this letter, and the object of it consequently was to lower the pride of some deacons, by showing the high character of the priesthood. For this end St Jerome has recourse to a favourite idea, that priests were originally called bishops, and partook of the government of the Church, and were reduced, subsequently, to an inferior rank, more by positive ecclesiastical law and arrangement, than in virtue of the divine institution. This is not the place to develope or to canvass this opinion; but it was necessary to state it, that the reader may understand the passages which you have objected, and which, I must say, in your own words on another occasion, “have no reference whatever to the question at issue.” The saint does not write to defend the rights of any bishop against the Bishop of Rome, or to establish the equality of all bishops, but to maintain the superiority of priests above deacons: “I hear that some one has broken out into such frenzy as to prefer deacons to presbyters, that is, to bishops: for whilst the Apostle teaches that presbyters and bishops are the same, what possesses the minister of tables and widows that he should haughtily raise himself above those by whose prayers the body and blood of Christ are con-

\* Hier. Ep. Tom. III. f. 61.

secerated?"\* He proceeds to establish the identity of priesthood and Episcopacy from various texts of Scripture, and refers to the mode originally followed in the election of the bishop of the church of Alexandria. As these are matters which you would feel bound to explain to your Calvinistic brethren, I can spare myself and readers the trouble of all elucidation. After the reference to the church of Alexandria, he adds what may be deemed a saving clause: "What does a bishop do, excepting ordination, which a presbyter may not do?" Then, with special reference to the high pretensions of some deacons of the Church of Rome, he says: "The Church of the Roman city is not to be thought one thing, and the Church of the whole world another. Gaul, and Britain, and Africa, and Persia, and the East, and India, and all the barbarous nations adore the one Christ,—observe the one rule of truth. If authority is sought for, the world is greater than one city. Wherever a bishop is, whether at Rome, or at Eugubium, or at Constantinople, or Rhegium, or Alexandria, or Tanis, he is of the same merit, of the same priesthood. The power of wealth, and the lowliness of poverty makes a bishop more elevated, or less exalted:† however, all are successors of the Apostles. But you say, how is it that at Rome the priest is ordained on the testimony of the deacon? Why do you urge to me the custom of one city? Why do you allege, as laws of the Church, the paucity whence haughtiness has taken rise? Every thing that is rare is sought after. Paucity makes deacons respected; the multitude of priests brings them into contempt. However, even in the Church of Rome, priests sit whilst the deacons remain standing." The reader can now judge whether the equality of merit and of priesthood, which Jerome claims for every bishop, wherever he reside, be intended to include an equality of jurisdiction. He asserted the equality of the Episcopacy, evidently with a view to embrace even the priests, in defence of whose privileges he was writing. Would you assert the perfect

\* Hieronym. Evagrio. f. 150. Tom. III. Edit. Basil.

† The edition of Erasmus at Basle has not the negation.

equality of the sacerdotal and Episcopal character and office ? Would you, in the face of all the monuments of antiquity, maintain that the bishops of Rome and Eugubium, of Alexandria and of Tanis, were distinguished by no difference of jurisdiction ? The Episcopal character is, indeed, alike in all ; the bishop of Eugubium is, in this respect, equal to the Bishop of Rome ; but the governing power, or jurisdiction, widely differs, for to the one the care of a small portion of the flock of Christ is committed,—to the other the charge of all the sheep and lambs is given.

But Jerome seems to depreciate the authority of the Roman Church.—Not when she teaches by the mouth of him who occupies the chair of Peter ; not when, in harmony with the churches of the universe, she proclaims the divinely inspired faith, for which Christ prayed that it fail not ; but he sets aside the practice of a few deacons, who took occasion, from the eminence of that Church in which they enjoyed special distinctions, to treat with less reverence those who were their superiors in the sacred ministry. Such customs as are peculiar to the Church of Rome, need not be adopted by the other churches in her communion : and the abuses of individuals attached to that Church may be condemned, even by those who, like Jerome, cry aloud that they cling to the chair of Peter,—who receive its faith and tradition with reverence, and who cherish its communion, because they “ know that it is the rock on which the Church was built.” The passages from this epistle, which you consider decisive, are such in regard to the inferiority of deacons to priests—but prove nothing beyond this, unless you are willing to allow the perfect equality of priests and bishops.

I have not partaken in the surprise which you anticipated from the views of this Father on the manner in which the Church was built on Peter. Jovinian had assailed virginity and clerical celibacy, and, like some moderns, had objected the example of Peter, who, having a mother-in-law, as the Scripture assures us, must have had a wife. St Jerome replied that his wife might have died before his call to the Apostleship,

a conjecture rendered probable by the omission of all mention of her in Scripture, and by the mother-in-law serving at the table when the fever had left her. He proceeded to show that John, on account of his virginity, enjoyed the special love of Christ, and was admitted to special familiarity by the Redeemer. He then objects to himself, that Peter was chosen to be the foundation of the Church; and he meets it by observing that the other Apostles likewise received similar powers, though he admits that, to prevent schism, Peter was chosen to be the head of all. He further inquires why the virgin, John, did not receive this distinction, and answers that the age of Peter was a reason for preferring him: "But, you say," says he, "the Church is founded upon Peter: though the same thing is elsewhere done upon all the Apostles, and all receive the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the strength of the Church is equally consolidated upon all: yet, nevertheless, one is chosen amongst the twelve, that a head being established, the occasion of schism may be removed. But why was not the virgin John chosen? Regard was had to age, because Peter was the elder, lest a very young man should be preferred to men of advanced age."<sup>\*</sup> It is clear, that whilst the saint advocates so strongly the excellence of virginity, and its special prerogatives, he is careful to lay down in strong and precise terms the primacy of Peter. All the Apostles are, indeed, in a certain degree the foundations of the Church, since of the heavenly Jerusalem, which is the Church in glory, it is said: "the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb."<sup>†</sup> But Peter is strictly the foundation, since to him only, and not to the others, Christ said: "Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church." All of them have received the keys of the kingdom, inasmuch as all have received the power of binding and loosing; but to Peter alone was said: "To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom." If Jerome could be thought to have affirmed the contrary, we would ask: where

\* S. Hier. Adv. Jov. I. 1, p. 16. Tom. III.

† Apoc. xxi. 14.

are the Scriptural passages to which he refers? But his meaning is plain. He maintains that similar powers were granted to the others, wherefore, it may be justly said, that upon all of them the strength of the Church rests and is consolidated: but Peter is the head, invested with all the authority necessary for maintaining order and unity; a head, by the appointment of whom all plausible pretext for schism is removed. Were not this his peculiar privilege, the saint would have had no occasion to explain why John was not chosen.

In his commentary upon the similitude of the wise man who built his house upon a rock, he observes: "On this rock the Lord founded the Church: from this rock Peter the Apostle derived his name. The foundation which the Apostolic architect laid, is our Lord Jesus Christ alone: on this stable and firm foundation, and of itself founded with a strong mass, the Church of Christ is built."<sup>\*</sup> These passages no wise weaken the force of the many others in which he treats expressly of the foundation of the Church by Christ on Peter. In reference to the similitude used by the Saviour, it was most natural to observe, that he was the wise man who built his church upon a rock, and that from this circumstance Peter was styled a rock. It would, indeed, be a strange phrase to say, that he built his Church upon himself, thus confounding the architect with the foundation, as would be said were he the rock of which Jerome speaks. Hear him elsewhere: "As Plato was the prince of philosophers, so was Peter of the Apostles: on him the Church of the Lord, an enduring structure, was built."<sup>†</sup> In his letter to Marcellus he says: "Peter, upon whom the Lord built his Church."<sup>‡</sup>

The allusion to the text of St Paul presents a change of metaphor. In the former Christ was the architect, and Peter the foundation: in this Paul is architect, and Christ the foundation. Metaphors and similitudes admit of this variety, and it would be unjust to transfer what regards one similitude to

\* Comm. Mat. c. viii. f. 12.

† S. Hier. l. 1, adv. Pelag. c. 4.

‡ Class. 2, Ep. 4, n. 2.

another, somewhat different. No man can lay any other foundation than Christ—his doctrine—his institutions—his merits, since there is salvation in no other name: but when Christ himself pleases to speak of himself as architect, the foundation which he lays must naturally be distinguished from himself, from whom, however, it derives all its strength and enduring qualities.

The commentary of Jerome on the promise of the Saviour to Peter, plainly establishes this relation between them. “What means,” asks he, “‘I say to thee?’ Because thou hast said to me: ‘Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God: I also say to thee;’ not in vain discourse, void of effect, but I say to thee, because my word effects what it implies: ‘that thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.’ As he gave light to the Apostles, that they might be called the light of the world, and they received other appellations from the Lord: so also he bestowed the name of Peter on Simon, who believed in the rock Christ; and according to the metaphor of a rock, it is properly said to him: ‘I will build my Church upon THEE, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.’ I think that the gates of hell are the vices and sins of men; or certainly the doctrines of heretics, by which men being allured are led to hell. Let no one, therefore, imagine that it is said of death, as if the Apostles whose martyrdoms he sees celebrated, were not subject to the condition of death.”\* Here this learned interpreter applies to Peter the term rock, and explains the promise, as if it were said: I will build my Church on thee. Against this Church neither the vices and sins of men, nor the doctrines of heretics, will prevail. Scandals must come, and may obscure the lustre of the Church, but they cannot effect her overthrow: heresies may be broached even by those who were children of the Church, but they can never receive her sanction, because Christ teaches in her “all days even to the consummation of the world.”

The observation of the saint in regard to bishops and priests

\* S. Hieron. Com. in Matt. Tom IX. f. 24, 25. Ed. Bas. an. 1516.

who abused the power of the keys, by rashly loosing those who should be bound, has no relation to the point at issue. It establishes the necessity of confession, since, as Jerome remarks, the bishop or priest, “in virtue of his office, when he hears the various sins, knows who is to be bound or who is to be loosed.”\* Though the saint applies the text in this place to the remission of sins by any bishop or priest, as we are wont to do, when speaking in general terms, yet he understands it specially of power granted to Peter; wherefore, shortly after, when commenting on the rebuke of Christ: “Go behind me, Satan,” he supposes his reader to inquire, how this is compatible with the sublime address made him, and with the powers conferred on him. “If,” he answers, “the inquirer reflect, he will perceive that the benediction, and beatitude, and power, and the building of the Church upon him, were promised to Peter for a future time, and were not granted at the present time: ‘I *will* build (he says) on thee my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and to thee I *will* give the keys of the kingdom of heaven;’—all in the future tense. Which had he given immediately, the error of a perverse confession (*his denial*) would never have taken place in him.”†

I do not find in the edition of this Father’s works which I use (that of Basle, an. 1516), the passage from the commentary on the epistle to Titus which you quote. The only remark made on that verse (*hujus rei, &c.*) is, “Correct straight forward what things are wanting, and then you will be able to ordain priests, when all persons in the Church will be upright.”‡ However, the words which you object present no difficulty. They state that it is the privilege of the Apostolic dignity to lay the foundation of a Church, which no one but an architect can lay, and that there is no other foundation but Christ Jesus. In this we are perfectly agreed, as I have already explained. Christ is the foundation of our faith and of all our hopes; and he was first proclaimed to the nations

\* S. Hieronym. Com. in Matt. Tom. IX. p. 24, 25.

† Ibid.

‡ Tom. IX. f. 189.

by the Apostles, and in succeeding ages by men emulating their zeal, and partaking of their character. “Inferior workmen may carry on the building on that foundation.”\*

The argument sought to be derived from what you conceive to be the opinion of Jerome in regard to the original equality of priests and bishops, rests on very questionable grounds. You are aware that Protestants, no less than Catholics, have laboured to explain his sentiments in accordance with the general testimony of tradition on this point. But were we to allow that such had been his view in regard to the priestly and Episcopal character, it would not militate against the superior prerogative of one priest, or bishop, to whom Christ had made a special promise. It would indeed suppose, that Peter received no more than the common character of priesthood, but with special power to found the Church, and exercise that governing authority, by which, subsequently, according to this opinion, the ecclesiastical distinction between priests of various orders was ordained, or sanctioned. Not to wander too far from our subject, and place weapons in the hands of your Calvinistic brethren, this argument may be set apart.

The apocalyptic expressions of St Jerome in regard to Rome, relate to the luxury and vices of the inhabitants of that great city. It was in a spirit of humiliation that he referred to that period of life in which he lived, “*jure Quiritum*,” after the manner of its citizens, too much given to the follies of life. He meant not at all to detract from its spiritual prerogatives as the See of Peter, nor to utter any thing disrespectful to him who occupies that chair. On the contrary, he observed, that he undertook the work in obedience to the holy Pope Damasus:—“Pope Damasus, who first had urged me to this work, now sleeps in Christ.”† When he invited Marcella to flee from this city to Bethlehem, it was that, in solitude, she might enjoy that tranquillity of spirit which the distractions of such a city so easily interrupted. He repeated and applied to her

\* S. Hieron. Tom. IX. f. 189.

† S. Hieron. ad Paulinianum in lib. Didymi de Spir. S.

the prophetic order to go forth from Babylon, “even though heathenism was trodden under foot,”—because he saw the vices of pagan Rome still cherished by many of her Christian citizens. You discover not one redeeming word of veneration in his description. Please read over and ponder on these words:—“There is there indeed a holy Church, there are the trophies of the Apostles and martyrs, there is the true confession of Christ, there is that faith which was praised by the Apostle, and there the Christian religion is daily making new advances over prostrate heathenism.”\*

The principle which Jerome lays down, that in regard to daily communion, the fast of the Sabbath, and such other things as are not opposed to faith,† the immemorial usages of each portion of the Church may be followed, is correct, entirely worthy of this enlightened Father, and quite consistent with the spirit and authority of the Apostolic See. He was not the advocate of what you so confidently infer from his words—equal rights, and total absence of deference for Rome. That deference is shown especially by cherishing her faith, by observing the universal discipline of the Church which she is studious to maintain, and by maintaining no local usage to the prejudice or endangering of faith.

After the review of these passages, you return to the epistle of Jerome to Pope Damasus. You tell us that, in consequence of the distracted state of the East, where Arianism had prevailed, Jerome “turns to Rome, in which he had become a presbyter some years before, and whose Bishop he was desirous to propitiate, in order to secure a kind and favourable reception.” Was Jerome then the sycophant who thus flattered Pontifical pride? Did he not commence his letter by bidding “the pride of Roman supremacy to be laid aside,” and reminding the Pontiff that he is the successor of the fisherman? Did he employ the awful adjuration of the crucified Redeemer, and consubstantial Trinity, for no other purpose than to gratify the vanity

\* “Est ab Apostolo prædicata fides, et gentilitate calcata, in sublime se quotidie erigens vocabulum Christianum.”—Ep. ad Marcellam, Op. om. Tom. I. p. 82. Edit. Par.

† “Præsertim quæ fidei non officiant.”—Ep. ad Lucinium, ib. p. 126.

of an aged Bishop? I am sorry that you have equally mistaken his character and meaning. You adduce Erasmus, to prove that by the chair of Peter, on which as on a rock the Church was built, Jerome did not mean Rome: but can the hesitating remark\* of a man of more than suspected faith, justify you in offering violence to the plain and positive words of this Father? Besides, Erasmus on the following words remarks: "Here Jerome by all means seems to think that all churches should be subject to the Roman See, or certainly not estranged from it, as it peculiarly glories in the Apostle, who held the Primacy among the Apostles; and is orthodox in such a way as to be the first in dignity of the orthodox churches."†

You explain the words of Jerome as meaning: "I am not in communion with these heretical Arians—our faith is not the same. But I am in communion with you, for you hold the faith of Peter, together with his chair. On that faith—that rock—I know that the Church is built, out of which Church, whoever eateth the lamb is profane."—Compare your words with those of Jerome, and mark their difference. He speaks of assaults on the one side by the Arian frenzy, on the other by conflicting parties in the Church—the adherents of three pretendants to the patriarchate. As to the Arians, he needed no advice—he had no doubts; but he doubted which was the real patriarch; and he further doubted, whether he could profess three hypostases, which was required as a condition of communion with the church of Antioch. He refuses, then, to communicate with any of the claimants, until the Pontiff shall inform him with whom he ought to hold communion; he declines professing three hypostases, until he shall be directed by the same authority. He grounds his application on his knowledge, that the chair of Peter is the rock on which the Church is built. How, then, can it be pretended, that it is the mere accident of a common belief that leads him to apply to the occupant of that chair, more to flatter him than to receive the necessary authority and direction! "His very object, you

\* "Utarbitror."—*Erasmus*

( Erasm. Scholia in Hier. fol. 60. Tom. III.

say, was to ingratiate himself with the Pope, and obtain an honourable recall from his self-imposed exile.” How unjust is this imputation! how inconsistent with the evidence which his history and his writings afford!

But Jerome, you say, protests “that he follows no primate but Christ.”\* Neither do we. It is his divine authority we reverence and adore when we yield obedience to him whom He has entrusted with the care of his flock. You beg us to consider, that our construction of this epistle requires us to set Jerome against himself. To me this does not appear. He is throughout perfectly consistent. In determining the legitimate pastors of the Church, he judges by their communion with the See of Peter; in the choice of expressions by which the doctrine of faith is to be maintained inviolate, he appeals to its authority. To it he constantly refers where faith is in question. Thus, twenty years afterwards, writing to the virgin Demetrias, he observed: “When you were a child, and the bishop Anastasius of holy and blessed memory governed the Roman Church, a fierce tempest of heretics from the eastern parts attempted to pollute and destroy the simplicity of that faith which was praised by the voice of the Apostle. But this man, very rich in his poverty, and full of Apostolic solicitude, immediately struck the noxious head, and broke the hissing mouths of the hydra. Since, I fear, and even have learned by report, that these poisoned plants are still remaining and germinating in some, I think you should be charitably warned, to hold the faith of the holy Innocent, who is the successor and child of the Apostolic chair, and of the holy man just mentioned; and not to receive any strange doctrine, however prudent and wise you may appear to yourself.”† Writing to Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria, he says: “Be it known to you, that nothing is more sacred for us, than to maintain the rights of Christ, nor to move the limits which the Fathers have plac-

\* “Nullum primum nisi Christum sequens.”—Hier. Damaso. f. 60. The version “no primate” is equivocal. It would be more literally rendered: “I follow no one first, but Christ.”

† S. Hier. Ep. 130, n. 16, clas. 4. Edit. Vallars.

ed, and always to bear in mind, that the Roman faith was praised by the mouth of the Apostle, of which faith the Church of Alexandria glories to partake.”\* All this is perfectly consistent with his disregarding the assumption of some deacons of the Church at Rome, and objecting to them the contrary practice of the Church throughout the world. His recognition of the supreme authority of its Bishop is nowise at variance with his assertion, that the Episcopal character is the same in the bishop of the humblest See. He has not, however, exactly said, as you have imagined, “that every bishop should consider himself as Aaron, and the presbyters as Aaron’s sons, and the deacons as Levites.” He does not distinguish these grades with such precision. His words are: “What Aaron and his sons and the Levites were in the temple, the same let the bishops and priests and deacons claim for themselves in the Church.”† Through the whole letter he speaks of bishops and priests as the same; hence it might be fair to infer, if such comparisons warrant any strict inference, that the chief Bishop in the new dispensation corresponds with the High Priest under the ancient covenant.

The questions which you have added towards the close of the chapter are fully answered by the exposition of the texts already given. You are pleased to conclude by stating your conviction, “that if the Church of Rome would consent to a thorough adoption of the sentiments of Jerome, there would be very little material for serious controversy remaining.” You must then be prepared for the adoption of clerical celibacy, the veneration of reliques, and many other points hitherto treated with little favour, which, you admit, were defended by him, and you must particularly cry out in his language to the actual Bishop of Rome: “Whoever is united with the chair of Peter is mine: I am joined in communion to your holiness, that is to the chair of Peter. On that rock I know that the Church was built.”

\* S. Hier. Ep. 63, clas. 3, an. 397.

† Ad Evagr. Tom. II. p. 221. Edit. Par.

## LETTER XXI.

ST AUGUSTIN.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

I FULLY agree with you that “a brighter name than that of St Augustin can hardly be found in the annals of the Church since the Apostolic day.” In some of his works he affirmed that Peter was the foundation of the Church ; but you maintain that he afterwards abandoned this interpretation. For proof of this assertion you refer to the twenty-first chapter of the first book of his “Retractations ;” which, as you know, designate his review of his former works, accompanied with the retouching of the matters already handled, but not always with the abandonment of former sentiments. I shall give the entire paragraph :—“ During the same period of my priesthood I wrote also a book against the letter of Donatus, who was the second bishop at Carthage after Majorinus, of the party of Donatus, in which letter he endeavours to prove that the baptism of Christ should be believed to be only in his communion : which position we oppose. In which book I said, in one place, concerning the Apostle Peter, that the Church was founded on him as on a rock : which sense is celebrated by many mouths in the verses of the most blessed Ambrose, where he says of the cock : ‘At his crowing the very rock of the Church washes away his fault.’ But I know that afterwards I very frequently explained what was said by the Lord : ‘Thou art Peter, and on this rock I shall build my Church,’ in such a way, that it might be understood to mean, on him whom Peter confessed, saying : ‘Thou art Christ the Son of the living God :’ and thus Peter, being named from this rock,

should represent the Church, which is built upon this rock, and received the keys of the kingdom of heaven. For it was not said to him: ‘Thou art a rock :\* but thou art Peter;’ ‘but the rock was Christ,’ on confessing whom, as the whole Church confesses him, Simon was called Peter. Let the reader choose which of these two explanations is the more probable.’† This, sir, is far from an absolute ‘abandonment’ of the former interpretation. Augustin, indeed, seems to incline to the second mode of understanding the text, but he makes reference to the former, and submits both to the judgment of the reader, that he may adopt the one that seems more correct—a circumstance which you have been careful not to notice. His own mind wavered, because he was struck with that difference of gender which he found in the Greek, and being unacquainted with the language spoken by our Saviour, he was unable satisfactorily to solve for himself a difficulty which a slight knowledge of that language would have entirely dissipated. You would willingly abridge the liberty which the holy doctor, in the uncertainty of his own mind, left to his readers, and you would determine our judgment contrary to the most obvious rules of sound interpretation. We respect the modesty of Augustin in manifesting the hesitancy of his mind. Of the two explanations which he offers, we adopt that which is most obvious, most conformable to the context, and supported by the suffrages of the great host of ancient and modern interpreters. Besides the Protestant interpreters already produced,‡ Bishop Pearson expressly says, that the Church was “built upon Peter according to our Saviour’s promise;”§ and Bishop Beveridge, not venturing to deny this, vainly attempts, contrary to the manifest tenor of the Lord’s discourse, addressed specially to Peter, to extend it to the other Apostles: “I also say unto thee, thou art Peter (a rock as the word signifies), and upon this rock I

\* *Petra—Petrus.*

† “*Harum autem durarum sententiarum quæ sit probabilior eligat lector.*” S. Aug. l. 1, *Retract. c. xxi.*

‡ See Letter II. pp. 24, 26, 27, 28.

§ Pearson on the Creed, art. ix. p. 506.

will build my Church ; that is, thou shalt be one of those upon whom I will build my Church, like an house upon a rock that shall never be moved.”\* In the days of Augustine, Ambrose, whose canticle he quotes, declares Peter to be “the very rock of the Church,” and this interpretation was recognised as correct by the many, who, throughout the Church, sang the hymn composed by that sainted prelate. Was it perfectly fair in you to have concealed this fact from your readers, by leaving a hiatus in your quotation ?

Though Augustin wavered as to the application of the term “rock” in this passage, he had no doubt whatever of the primacy of Peter. In his polemical works against the Donatists, he declines abiding by the authority of Cyprian, and justifies himself by observing, that even Peter—whom he takes to be Cephas, mentioned by St Paul to the Galatians—did, in one instance, deviate from the correct path ; and so Cyprian might be admitted to have erred, without any disrespect to his memory. “I think,” says he, “that without any disrespect to him, the bishop Cyprian is compared with the Apostle Peter, as far as regards the crown of martyrdom : but I ought rather to fear lest I should be disrespectful to Peter: for who does not know THAT THE PRINCIPALITY OF THE APOSTLESHIP IS TO BE PREFERRED TO ANY BISHOPRIC ?”†

When Augustin says of the Lord : “that he gave those keys therefore to his Church, that those things which she should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven, and that those which she should bind on earth should be bound in heaven,”‡—he speaks of the power as existing in the Church, without specifying in whom it is lodged. He adds, by way of explanation, “that whosoever would not believe that his sins are forgiven in

\* Beveridge’s Serm. Christ’s Church Established on a Rock, vol. i. p. 155.

† S. Aug. l. ii. contra Donat. c. i. § 2. “Quis enim nescit illum Apostolatus principatum cuiilibet episcopatui præferendum?” A different reading is given in a Belgic manuscript apud Lov. “Illum Apostolatus principatu cuiuslibet episcopatui præferendum.”

‡ L. i. de doct. Christ. C. xv. p. 10. Edit. Ven.

the Church, they should not be forgiven him ; but whosoever believed it, and, being corrected, turned away from sin, being in the bosom of the same Church, should be healed by the same faith and reformation."—This does not at all signify that the keys are given to each individual ; but it affirms that no one can benefit by this power, unless he truly believe its existence in the Church, and also abandon the vices to which he has been subject. This faith and reformation prepare him for receiving the benefit of this divine power in the tribunal of penance.

The passage which you object from the commentary on the twenty-first chapter of St John, contains the explanation of the rock, which Augustin gave, under the erroneous impression, that the change of gender was intended to denote the distinction of the persons. He proposes to himself the question, why Peter is ordered to follow Christ, and John is directed to remain until his coming : also, why Peter, who loved Christ more than the other Apostles, was not rewarded with the love of his Divine Master in a greater degree than the others, John being styled "the disciple whom Jesus loved." He answers, that Peter was a figure of the Church in her present state of misery and infirmity, which is directed to follow Christ, by ardent love and patient suffering, to the kingdom of his beatitude ; but that John was the figure of the saints in glory, who are loved by Christ, and abide tranquilly in his enjoyment : "which two lives Peter and John typified, each of them one." Whilst indulging in this allegorical interpretation, he observes that, amidst the frailties and miseries of life,—"we are provided with the succours of alms, to ensure the success of our prayer : forgive us our 'trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.' " "The Church, happy in hope, does this in this wretched life : of which Church Peter the Apostle, *on account of the Primacy of his Apostleship*, sustained the person, in a figurative universality. For, as to what strictly regards himself, he was by nature an individual man, by grace an individual Christian ; but, by more abundant grace, he was an Apostle, and the FIRST : but when it was said to him : 'To

thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven,'—he represented the whole Church, which in this world is agitated by various temptations, as by showers, floods, and tempests, and which does not fall, because it is founded on the rock whence Peter derived his name.\* What follows is but the development of this idea, as already set forth in the passage from the book of retractions. Every one must see, that the holy doctor gives an allegorical, and not a literal interpretation, when he says that Peter, by a figurative universality, represented the Church militant—the whole collection of believers in the present state of imperfection and misery—especially meaning thereby to prove that the words "follow me," are to be considered as addressed to this same universal multitude of believers. Yet he is careful to state why, above all the other Apostles, he was the representative of this Church militant: "On account of the Primacy of his Apostleship"—"because he was the first Apostle."† As by his application to all the faithful of the words "follow me," Augustin could not mean to deny, that they were primarily and literally addressed to Peter; so by his application to them of the words: "To thee I shall give the keys of the kingdom of heaven,"—he did not signify, that these keys were not primarily, and in the obvious meaning of power and authority, given to Peter. The reason of his generalizing them is to sustain his position, that the Church, in its present state, in which it needs the remission of sin, is signified by this Apostle: "Therefore," says he, "the Church, which is founded on Christ, received, through Peter, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, that is, the power of binding and loosing sins. For what the Church is, strictly speaking,‡ in Christ, Peter is the same mystically in the rock: ac-

\* S. Aug. Tract. 124, in c. 21. Joan. Ev. Tom. III. Col. 822. Edit. Ven.

† "Cujus Ecclesiæ Petrus Apostolus, propter Apostolatus sui primatum, gerebat figurata generalitate personam."—Ib. Col. 822.

‡ "Quod est enim per proprietatem in Christo Ecclesia, hoc est per

cording to which signification Christ is the rock, Peter the Church. This Church, therefore, which Peter represented, as long as she is in the midst of evils, is freed from evils, by loving and following Christ. And she follows him, especially by means of those who contend unto death for the truth. But to the multitude is said, ‘follow me,’ for which multitude Christ suffered.”\* In pursuing this allegorical explanation, Augustine evidently presupposes that the keys were given to Peter, and that through him† the Church received them, inasmuch as not for himself only—“an individual man, an individual Christian”—but for all the Church, he, who was “an Apostle, and first of the Apostles,” received this power.‡ “For all the saints,” says he, “inseparably belonging to the body of Christ, PETER, THE FIRST OF THE APOSTLES, received the keys of the kingdom, for its government in this most tempestuous life, to bind and loose sins:§ and with reference to the same saints, John the Evangelist reclined on the bosom of Christ, to express the most tranquil repose of this most secret life” with God. Somewhat further on you assert that Augustine “extended the same representative capacity to John,” and you quote freely from this commentary on the twenty-first chapter of the evangelist, to prove this position: but you should have observed, that John

significationem Petrus in petra; qua significatione intelligitur Christus petra, Petrus Ecclesia.”—Ib.

\* “Sed universitati dicitur: sequere me.”

† “Ecclesia ergo quæ fundatur in Christo, claves ab eo regni cœlorum accepit in Petro, id est potestatem ligandi solvendique peccata.”—Aug. Tract. 124, in Joan. Col. 822.

‡ Quod enim ad ipsum proprie pertinet, natura unus homo erat, gratia unus Christianus, abundantiore gratia unus *idemque primus Apostolus*: sed quando ei dictum est. Tibi dabo claves regni cœlorum, et quocumque ligaveris in terra, erit ligatum et in cœlis, et quocumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in cœlis, universam significabat ecclesiam.”—Ib.

§ “Omnibus igitur sanctis ad Christi corpus inseparabiliter pertinentibus, propter hujus vitæ procellosissimum gubernaculum, ad liganda et solvenda peccata claves regni cœlorum primus Apostolorum Petrus accepit.”—Ib. Col. 824. The Church is here represented as a ship whose helm has been entrusted by Christ to Peter.

is not spoken of as the representative of the Church militant, which representative capacity is peculiarly assigned by the holy doctor to Peter, "on account of the primacy of his Apostleship." John is said to represent or signify the Church triumphant, inasmuch as, reposing on the bosom of Jesus, he presents an image of the happiness of the saints reposing in the enjoyment of God. The representative character of Peter is clearly marked as *official* and *authoritative*, directed to the government of the Church militant in this stormy life: he is the pilot placed by Christ at the helm;—he is the ruler, having received from Christ the keys of his kingdom. But the repose of John is merely *emblematic* of heavenly beatitude. Who can confound what is so clearly distinguished in the Scripture, as well as by Augustin?

The passage which you object from the commentary on the fifth chapter of the first epistle of John, is the explanation of the text: "every one who believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." The saint observes that demons confessed this truth no less than Peter, but Peter through affection. To the question of our Saviour—"Who do men say that I am?" Peter answered, and said: 'Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.' And he heard from the Lord: 'Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven.'—See what praises follow this faith: 'Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church.'—What is it: 'On this rock I will build my Church?' On this faith—on what was said: 'Thou art Christ the Son of the living God.' On this rock, he says, I will found my Church. This is great praise."\* In this place it is manifest that Augustin approaches nearer the general interpretation of the Fathers, and the natural meaning of the text. It is no longer on Christ that the Church is understood by him to be built by Christ—an incongruity of phrase which must strike every one—but it is on the confession of the divinity of Christ, as

\* Aug. in Ep. Joan. c. 5, Tract. 10. Tom. III. Col. 894. Edit. Venet.

made by Peter, or in other words, on Peter confessing his divinity.

In the passage which you have quoted from the seventysixth sermon on the fourteenth chapter of St Matthew, Augustin indulges a little in what the taste of his age permitted, a play on the words "*Petrus*" and "*petra*;" and concludes the paragraph by giving, as the meaning of our Redeemer: "On myself, the Son of the living God, I will build my Church. I will build thee on me, not me on thee."<sup>\*</sup> It is injustice to Augustin to adduce this specimen of his biblical criticism, arising from a want of knowledge of the original language in which our Lord spoke: but it is still more unjust to use it as a proof that he disbelieved the primacy of Peter, which, in the very passage itself, he supposes, and in the context most strongly affirms. Thus he says here, that "he was called Peter, to signify the Church, for, because Christ is the rock, the Christian people is Peter, for the rock is the principal name, therefore Peter from *petra* the rock, as Christ is not called from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ."<sup>†</sup> In regarding Peter as the representative of the entire Church, he evidently considers him as its head and Primate, as he himself thus explains: "The same Peter by the rock surnamed blessed, bearing the figure of the Church, HOLDING THE PRINCE-DOM OF THE APOSTLESHIP—after he heard of the future passion of the Lord, which he foretold to his disciples would soon take place, displeased him."<sup>‡</sup> He calls him repeatedly "first and chief in the order of the Apostles."<sup>§</sup>

When the holy doctor, in the commentary on the twenty-first chapter of John, says, that "not only Peter, but the entire Church, binds and looses sins," it is because the power of

\* Serm. 76, alias 13 de verbis Domini, p. 415. Tom. V. Edit. Ven.

† Ib. Col. 415.

‡ "Ecclesiæ figuram portans, Apostolatus principatum tenens."—P. 416. Tom. V. Ed. Ven.

§ "Ipse enim Petrus in ordine Apostolorum primus"—"in illo ergo uno Apostolo, id est, Petro, in ordine Apostolorum primo et præcipuo."—Ib. Col. 415, 416.

Peter was not personal, for the exaltation of himself, but for the benefit of the Church at large, wherefore it is exercised by his successors ; and because it is common, as far as the remission of sins is concerned, to the Apostles, and to all legitimate pastors of the Church, to whom that power was granted expressly by Christ. Hence Augustin asks : “Are not these keys in the Church where sins are forgiven daily ? But since Peter, in signification, represented the Church, what was given to him individually, was given to the Church.”\* In this sense he says elsewhere : “On account of the person of the whole Church, which he alone represented, he was made worthy to hear : ‘I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’ Not an individual man, but the unity of the Church received these keys. Hence, therefore, THE EXCELLENCE OF PETER IS PROCLAIMED, because he represented the universality and unity of the Church, when it was said to him : ‘I give to thee,’ what was given to all. For that you may know that the Church has received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, hear what the Lord says elsewhere to all his Apostles : ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost.’ And immediately afterwards : ‘Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; whose sins you shall retain they are retained.’ This appertains to the keys, of which it is said : ‘Whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven.’ ”†

The application which Augustin makes to all prelates of the command to feed the sheep, is an extension of its meaning, made, in the general style of the Fathers, for purposes of edification, and is not at all adverse to the literal sense, which, on the contrary, it presupposes. It is because “in Peter alone the unity of all pastors was represented.”‡ “Justly did the Lord, after his resurrection, entrust to Peter the feeding of his

\* S. Aug. Serm. 149, de verbis Act. 10, p. 706. Tom. V.

† S. Aug. Serm. 296, in Natali Apost. I.

‡ S. Aug. Serm. 147, de verbis Evang. “In uno Petro figurabatur unitas omnium pastorum.” P. 702. Tom. V. Ed. Ven.

sheep; for he was not the only one among the disciples who was made worthy to feed the sheep of the Lord: but when Christ speaks to one, unity is commended: and to Peter primarily, because he is **THE FIRST AMONG THE APOSTLES.**"\*

When Augustin observes that "what was commended to Peter—what was enjoined on Peter—not Peter only, but likewise all the Apostles heard, held, kept, and especially that companion of his martyrdom—even as to the day—the Apostle Paul,"†—he states what all admit, that the other Apostles emulated the zeal of Peter in feeding the flock of Christ; but he does not assert that the general charge of it was common to all. It was not a commission, the exercise of which was to be confined to Peter exclusively, though it was his office to see that his colleagues fed that portion of the flock of Christ assigned to each.‡ He and they were to concur in this divine task, and the power and the duties were to be perpetual in the Church, her prelates at all times being charged to give to others the food of heavenly doctrine, which, as a divine deposit, is transmitted to them: wherefore Augustin beautifully says: "We feed: we are fed in common with you." But "**BLESSED PETER, THE FIRST OF THE APOSTLES,**"§ is the Chief Pastor, who directly from Christ received his authority and charge.

The passages of Augustin which relate to the catholicity of the Church, might, as you justly observe, be quoted in such a number as to fill a volume: but you must have read them rather cursorily, if you have not perceived "the slightest allusion to" the supremacy, or, if you will, "the domination of the Roman See." Some of the references to that See may, probably, have escaped your notice, from the African custom of speaking of the Roman Church, and the Western churches, in its communion, as the churches beyond the seas. With regard to Car-

\* "Quando Christus ad unum loquitur, unitas commendatur; et Petro primitus, quia in Apostolis Petrus est primus."—Serm. 296, p. 1195. Tom. V.

† Serm. in Natali Ap. Petri et Pauli, Tom. V. p. 836.

‡ "Feed the flock of God which is among you."—1 Pet. v. 2.

§ "Beatus Petrus Apostolorum primus."—Serm. 296, sub initium.

thage, Augustin remarks, that “the city was convenient to the regions beyond the seas, and of illustrious renown: wherefore its bishop had no small authority, and might disregard the combined multitude of his enemies, when he saw himself united, by letters of communion, to the ROMAN CHURCH, IN WHICH THE PRINCEDOM OF THE APOSTOLIC CHAIR ALWAYS FLOURISHED, and to other countries from which the Gospel came to Africa, where he was ready also to plead his cause, if his adversaries should endeavour to estrange these churches from him.”\* In the passage which you quote from the Council of Zerta, which you call Tertensian, the saint states that the Donatists “acknowledged they had nothing to allege against the Catholic Church, which is spread throughout the world.”† By this they meant the Church in communion with the Roman See, as may be learned from the sequel of the letter, in which the prelates, in whose name it was written by Augustin, observe that the Donatists, when pressed in regard to some charges, pleaded that one cause or person should not be suffered to create prejudice against another cause or person; and thus “they confirmed by their own words what we before said concerning the Church, that the cause and person of Cecilian, whatever it might be, could not prejudice not only the Catholic Church beyond the seas, against which they acknowledged that they had nothing to allege, but even the African Catholic Church which is united with it in communion.”‡ In his book against Petilian, he explains more precisely what Church beyond the seas is that with which the African was united: “If,” says he, “all throughout the whole world were such as thou most wantonly assertest, what has

\* S. Aug. ad Glorium et Eleusium Ep. 43. Olim 162, p. 92. Tom. II. Ed. Ven.

† “Confessi sunt enim contra ecclesiam Catholicam, quæ toto terrarum orbe diffunditur, nihil se habere quod dicerent.”—Conc. Zertens. Ep. ad Donat. inter opera Aug. Tom. II. p. 457. Bishop Hopkins gives a strange translation: “They have made their confession against the Catholic Church, which is diffused throughout the whole world, and have no more that they can say.”

‡ S. Aug. Ep. 142. Tom. II. p. 462.

been done to thee by the Chair of the Roman Church, in which Peter sat, and in which Anastasius sits at this day, or of the church of Jerusalem, in which James sat, and in which John now sits: with which we are joined in Catholic unity, and from which you separated yourselves through impious frenzy?"\*

In the letter to Saturnine and Euphrates, in which Augustin congratulates them on their return to the Church, he observes, that "this house of God is not confined to one corner of the earth, but spread throughout the world." Having proved it by many passages of Scripture, he adds: "The enemies of this great house yielded to these and such like testimonies, of which so many are found throughout the whole Scripture, so far as to acknowledge that they had no cause of complaint against the church beyond the seas, which, nevertheless, they confessed to be Catholic. We communicate with this church, that we may be made worthy to be united to the members of Christ."†

In reference to the investigation which took place at Rome under Melchiades, in regard to Cecilian, St Augustin writing to those of Cirta proposes this dilemma:—"Let them reflect on this very short, and if I mistake not, decisive point—that either the case has been investigated in the ecclesiastical trial beyond the seas, or it has not. If it has not been investigated, the Christian society throughout all the nations beyond the seas is innocent, of which society we enjoy the communion; and therefore they (the Donatists) are separated certainly by a sacrilegious rupture from those innocent men. If the cause has been there investigated, who does not understand—who does not perceive—who does not see—that they with whom communion was from that time interrupted, were overcome in the investigation?"‡

From the passage you have given from the letter of Augustin to Hesychius, "*on the end of the world*," as "a specimen

\* L. ii. contra, Litt. Petiliani, c. l. p. 254. Ed. Ven.

† Ep. 142. Tom. II. p. 462

‡ S. Aug. Cirtensibus, Ep. 144, p. 469. Tom. II. Edit. Ven.

of his views in regard to Roman supremacy," most readers would imagine that he maintained, some nations had received the faith without submitting to the authority of the Bishop of Rome. Yet he speaks of the fulfilment of prophecy in the conversion of nations, and in this sense, he observes, that "the Lord with an oath promised to the seed of Abraham, not the Romans alone, but all nations, in consequence of which promise it has already happened that some nations, which are not included in the Roman empire, received the Gospel, and were united to the Church which fructifies and increases in the whole world."\*—He states, that "there are in Africa numberless barbarous nations, in which the Gospel has not yet been preached—and who are not all under the Roman power," but who, nevertheless, are embraced within the divine promise. Could I believe that you introduced the passage which you have quoted with a view to give your readers to understand that Augustin vindicated Christian nations from the authority of the Bishop of Rome, I could not give you credit for the candour which you claim, and which never should be wanting in honourable controversy.

The advice given by St Augustin to Casulanus, which you object as adverse to the primacy, is in conformity with the authority and practice of his master St Ambrose, and in perfect harmony with our principles, as has been already shown. The fast of Saturday, observed at Rome, was obligatory on the faithful of that Church, either by positive enactment, or ancient usage, having the force of law; but its obligation did not necessarily extend to all the churches of the universe, because no general law had been then made to that effect. Where the usage did not exist, the faithful were at liberty to conform to the discipline of their respective churches for the reason which Augustin thus assigns: "for in those matters wherein the Divine Scripture determines nothing, the custom of the people of God, or the institutions of our forefathers, are to be regarded as

\* Ep. 199, ad Hesychium de fine sæc. p. 758. "Quæ non tenentur ditione Romana."

law.”\* In this epistle, the holy doctor quotes the words of those who urged the practice on the ground that “Peter, head of the Apostles, gate-keeper of heaven, and foundation of the Church, taught its observance to the Romans, whose faith is proclaimed throughout the entire world.” He does not dispute these titles; but as the fast was not generally established, he recommends the imitation of the harmony which existed between Peter and his colleagues. “As, therefore,” says he, “Peter and his fellow disciples lived harmoniously, so let those who fast on Saturday, whom Peter planted, and those who dine on Saturday, whom his fellow disciples planted, live in harmony.”† The concluding recommendation, to follow in such matters the custom of particular churches, and the authority of the bishop, is the same as would be given at this day by every divine in the Catholic communion. You need only refer to any of our moral theologians.‡

Your last argument from Augustin, is taken from his list of heresies. You cannot persuade yourself that a doctrinal tribunal, such as we believe, was generally acknowledged in the early ages, wherein so many heresies prevailed: although you acknowledge that several of them existed even in the days of the Apostles; and surely you must admit that there was then, at least, a teaching authority, capable of defining revealed truth, and proscribing error. The history of the Church testifies how efficient the authority of the Bishops of Rome was in this regard; and the learned Protestant, Casaubon, admits that “no one who is the least versed in ecclesiastical history, can doubt that God made use of the Holy See, during many ages, to preserve the doctrines of faith.”§ The pride, corruption, and ignorance of men, explain how heresies multiplied, notwithstanding the recognition of a divinely established tribunal. You allege, that among the eighty-eight heresies, not one sen-

\* S. Aug. Casulano, Ep. 36. Tom. II. p. 68.

† Ibid.

‡ See Theol. Mor. P. Thomæ a Charmes, tract. de legibus. Art. V. Par. 3, p. 80.

§ Casaubon Exercit. xv. ad Annal. Baron.

tence can be found upbraiding the heretics with their departure from the Church of Rome. The catalogue was not composed for them, and departure from the Church was common to them all, whilst St Augustin undertook to specify the peculiar errors of each sect. Nevertheless, he marked down the effort of the Donatists to maintain the semblance of the authority of Peter in their sect, by sending a bishop to reside at Rome, or sending some bishops of the sect to consecrate one there. If he did not upbraid them with departing, he at least affectionately invited the heretics of his day to return : “ Come, brethren, if you wish to be ingrafted on the vine. It is a cause of affliction to us to behold you lying cut off from it, as you are. Count over the Bishops from the very See of Peter, and see how one succeeded the other in that list of Fathers. This is the rock against which the proud gates of hell do not prevail.”\*

The profound veneration of Augustin, and of all the Catholic bishops of Africa, for the Roman See, was manifested in the most solemn manner, in the measures adopted against the heresy of Pelagius and Cælestius. A numerous council, held at Carthage in the year 410, addressed Pope Innocent as their “most blessed and honoured lord, and holy brother,” and prayed, “that the authority of the Apostolic See might confirm their decrees, in order to provide for the salvation of many, and correct the perversity of some.” They concluded by expressing their undoubted confidence that his judgment would be such as would fill them all with joy.† In a letter from a similar venerable assembly, held shortly after at Milevis (Mela), the bishops begin by observing, that “Since the Lord, by a special gift of his grace, has placed you in the Apostolic See, we beseech you to vouchsafe to use your pastoral diligence in behalf of the great dangers of the weak members of Christ.” Among the texts by which they establish the necessity of grace, they allege the assurance of our Lord to Peter: “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith may not fail;” and they conclude thus:—

\* Ps. contra partem Donati.

† Ep. 175, olim. 90. Tom. II. p. 617.

" We think that, through the mercy of the Lord our God, who vouchsafes both to direct your counsels and to hear your prayers, those who entertain such perverse and pernicious opinions, will readily assent to the authority of your Holiness, derived from the authority of the Divine Scriptures, so that we may have occasion rather of gratulation at their correction, than of sorrow at their ruin."\* The Pontiff recognised in the reverence made to his authority, nothing more than faithful adherence to the examples of antiquity, and due respect for the rights of the chair of Peter. His authoritative decree, directed to the prelates of Carthage, begins thus :—" In investigating those things, which it is meet should be treated of with all care by priests, and especially by a true, and just, and Catholic council, following the examples of ancient tradition, and mindful of ecclesiastical discipline, you have properly maintained the vigour of our religion, not less now in consulting us, than before, when you pronounced judgment ; since you determined that your judgment should be referred to us, as you know what is due to the Apostolic See, since all of us placed in this station desire to follow the Apostle himself, from whom the episcopacy and the whole authority of this order proceeded : following whom, we know how to condemn what is evil, and to approve what is praiseworthy. Observing the institutions of the Fathers with priestly fidelity, you do not allow them to be trodden under foot ; for they decreed, not by human impulse, but by divine direction, that whatsoever might be done in provinces, however separate and remote, should not be deemed terminated until it had come to the knowledge of this See ; that the judgment, which might be found just, might be confirmed with its whole authority, and the other churches (as waters issuing from the fountain, and through the different parts of the whole world flowing, pure streams from an unpolluted source), might thence take what they might prescribe."† His letter to the prelates of Mela is also couched in the language of one having

\* Ep. 176, olim. 92, p. 620.

† Ep. 181.

authority.\* Neither document was viewed by Augustin or his colleagues as marked with the character of arrogant assumption; but they considered "the pestilence condemned by the most manifest judgment of the Apostolic See:"† and they maintained that further examination was unnecessary: "Why," cried Augustin to the Pelagians, "do you still demand an investigation, which has already taken place at the Apostolic See?"‡ A few months after the confirmation of the African councils had reached Africa, addressing his flock, he observed: "Already have the decrees of two councils on this matter been sent to the Apostolic See: the rescripts from thence have reached us: the cause is decided: would to heaven the error were for ever abandoned."§ Allow me, then, Right Reverend Sir, to conclude this letter in the very words of this illustrious doctor: "Shall we hesitate to take refuge in the bosom of that Church, which, from the Apostolic See, through the succession of bishops, even to the acknowledgment of mankind generally, has obtained supreme authority, heretics raging around in vain, condemned as they have been, partly by the judgment of the people themselves, partly by the authority of councils, partly also by the splendour of miracles? To reject its authority, is truly either the height of impiety or desperate presumption."||

\* Ep. 182, olim. 91. 93. Tom. II. p. 635, inter Aug.

† Ep. 191, olim. 104, p. 709. Tom. II.

‡ Operis imperf. contra Julianum, l. ii. c. 103, p. 993. Tom. X.

§ Serm. 131, de verbis Apost. c. 10, Col. 645. Tom. V.

|| De utilitate credendi, c. 7, Col. 69. Tom. VIII,

## LETTER XXII.

ST CHRYSOSTOM.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

THE last witness of the faith of the fourth century whom you introduce to our notice is the eloquent bishop of Constantinople. In his work "On the Priesthood,"—by which he understood the Episcopal office—he speaks very clearly, and quite to our satisfaction. He observes that Christ, "speaking with the Prince of the Apostles, says: 'Peter, lovest thou me?' and Peter answering affirmatively, he adds: 'If thou lovest me, feed my sheep.' The Master interrogates the disciple, whether he is loved by him: not that he may be informed—for how should he seek information, to whom the hearts of all men were open?—but to teach us how much he regards the government of his flock. How great reward will he not bestow hereafter on the pastors and rulers of this flock? Wherefore, when the disciple had answered: 'Thou knowest, Lord, that I love thee; and had appealed to himself, who was loved, as the witness of this affection, the Saviour Jesus did not cease, but added also the judgment of love.\* For he did not then wish a declaration of the great love which Peter bore him, for that was already manifest to us by many proofs: but he had it in view to teach both Peter and the rest of us his own great benevolence and love for his Church: that by this means we also might cheerfully assume the care and charge of the same

\* S. Joan. Chrys. l. ii. de Sacerdotio. In the Latin translation it is rendered, "Amoris quoque judicium adjunxit." It seems to mean the reward adjudged to the love of Peter. Bishop Hopkins mistakes it for *indictum*.

Church. For why did he shed his blood? Certainly that he might purchase to himself the sheep, the care of which he entrusted to Peter, and to the successors of Peter. Justly then Christ thus spoke: ‘Who then is the faithful and prudent servant whom the Lord placed over his family?’’ You perceive that Peter is here styled the Prince of the Apostles, and receives immediately from Christ the charge of his flock: but you imagine that the force of the expressions is weakened by the reasoning of Chrysostom, who infers, from the charge of Christ to Peter, that our love should be manifested in feeding his flock. This inference does not at all imply the extension of the words of Christ to others besides Peter and his successors in his See;\* but inasmuch as the love of Peter was rewarded by his being entrusted with the charge of the flock of Christ, so those who are pastors and rulers of his flock may expect that a great reward is reserved for them hereafter. It is of this reward, rather than of the proof of love, that he speaks. Peter alone, according to Chrysostom, was Prince of the Apostles, “endowed by Christ with special authority,” and “far surpassing the other Apostles. For he says: ‘Peter, dost thou love me more than all these?’’† Yet you assert that there is nothing in this which necessarily implies authority over the other Apostles!

The beautiful passage of the third book, wherein Chrysostom speaks of the power of binding and loosing granted to the priesthood, as a divine power not communicated to angels and archangels, cannot be offered as an explanation of any of the texts on which we lay peculiar stress as proving the Primacy of Peter. No mention whatever is made in it of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but only of binding and loosing, and of forgiving and retaining sins, which powers were promised and communicated to the Apostles in common, on occasions altogether distinct from those in which Christ said to Peter: “To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: feed

\* *τότε μετ' ἔκεινον.* This properly means “successors,” occupants of his See.

† Ibidem.

my lambs; feed my sheep."—"Why," asks Chrysostom, commenting on this latter passage, "does he address Peter concerning the sheep, passing by the others? He was the chief of the Apostles, and mouth of the disciples, and summit of that body: wherefore Paul also went up to see him in preference to the others."\*

Had you cited a little more of the passage from Chrysostom's eighty-third homily on St Matthew, I should not feel it necessary to do more than copy the quotation. In that discourse he observes, that Christ "permitted the very summit (*head*) of the Apostles to deny him."†—It is in relation to the prayer of Christ, that the faith of Peter might not fail, that Chrysostom observes: "As he is going to suffer, he speaks more humbly, that he may show his human nature: for He, who, on his confession, so founded and fortified the Church, that no danger, nor death itself could overcome it; who granted him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and committed to him so great power, and who never needed to pray for them all,—how much less should he need it in this circumstance? For with supreme authority he said: 'I will build on *thee* my Church, and will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.'‡—With this exposition of the text before you, you could easily have perceived what he meant when he said, that on the confession of Peter the Church was founded and fortified,—namely, on Peter himself confessing Jesus Christ.

Such, also, is the obvious meaning of the passage which you object from the fifty-fifth homily. In reference to the question of the Saviour, as to whom the Apostles believed him to be, Chrysostom says:—"What then does Peter, the mouth of all the Apostles, the summit of the whole college? When all had been questioned, he alone answers. .... What then does Christ say? 'Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas: for since thou hast proclaimed my Father, I also

\* Εκεριτεῖ τῷ πᾶς Αποστόλῳ καὶ σύμπα τῷ μαθητᾷ καὶ εκφυγῇ τῷ χειρὶ. S. Joan. Chrys. in c. xxi. Joan. hom. 87. Tom. III.

† S. Joan. Chrys. hom. lxxiii. in Matt.

‡ Ibidem.

mention him who begot thee.' . . . . But since he (*Peter*) added: 'thou art the Son of God;' (*Christ*) to show that he was 'the Son of God,' as he (*Peter*) was son of Jona, of the same substance with his father, therefore, added: 'and I say to thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church,' that is, upon the faith of the confession.\* Here he manifestly foretold that the multitude of believers would be great, and he elevates the thoughts of Peter, and makes him the pastor of the Church.—'And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' If they shall not prevail against the Church,—much less shall they prevail against me. . . . 'And to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' What means—'I will give TO THEE?' As the Father has given to thee the knowledge of me, so I will give to thee. And he did not say: I will ask the Father to give thee: but, though the power was great, and the greatness of the gift ineffable, nevertheless, he says: 'I will give thee.' What I pray, dost thou give? 'The keys,' he says, 'of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven.' How then is it not belonging to him who says—'I will give to thee,'—to grant also to sit on the right hand and on the left? You perceive how he leads Peter to a more exalted idea of himself, and reveals, and shows himself to be the Son of God by these two promises. For what God alone can grant, namely, the remission of sins, and that the Church, so many and so great waves violently rushing on it, should remain immovable; *whose head and shepherd, a lowly fisherman*, should surpass adamant in strength, the whole world struggling against him—all these things, I say, which God only can effect, he promises that he will give. Thus, the Father also said to Jeremiah: 'I have made thee a pillar of iron, and a wall of brass.' But the Father set him over one nation: CHRIST PLACED

\* τῷ πιστῷ τῆς ὁμολογίας. Bishop Hopkins criticises the version *fidem et confessionem*. At the sacrifice of perspicuity, I have given a literal version.

THIS MAN OVER THE ENTIRE WORLD.\* Wherefore, I would willingly ask those who say that the dignity of the Son is less than that of the Father, which gifts appear to them greater, those which the Father, or those which the Son granted to Peter? The Father made to him the revelation of his Son; but the Son granted to him partly to be able to diffuse every where throughout the world the revelation both of the Father and of the Son; partly that though he was a mortal man, he should, nevertheless, have celestial power, and have the keys of the kingdom of heaven; so Peter showed that the Church, spread through the entire world, is stronger than the firmament: ‘for heaven and earth shall pass away,’ he saith, ‘but my words shall not pass away.’ How is He inferior, who granted these things—who accomplished these things for Peter? I do not speak thus, as thinking that the works of the Father and of the Son are distinct: ‘for all things were made by him, and without him was made nothing:’ but I speak with a view to silence those who utter such things. But, do you understand with me from all these things, how great is his power. ‘I say to thee, he says, thou art Peter, and I upon THEE will build my Church; I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.’† You were wisely brief in your quotations from this eloquent Father. It is easy to cavil on a word, and to mislead a reader by referring to an ambiguous phrase; but to persuade an unbiassed mind that Chrysostom,—who styled Peter,—“the summit of the whole Apostolic band,”—who magnified the power given him by Christ, as great, the gift as ineffable,—who adduced it as an evidence of Christ’s divinity, that “*a lowly fisherman* should be made the shepherd of the flock,”—“the head of the mystic body,”—and should surpass in strength adamant itself, so that the whole world should struggle in vain against him, placed, as he was by Christ, over the entire world,—endowed with celestial power,—to persuade us, that Chrysostom proclaiming all these privi-

\* ΤΑΥΤΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΕΙΓΟΥΣΔΗΣ.

† S. Chrys. hom. 55.

leges of Peter, did not admit the primacy, was not an easy task, and which you, therefore, prudently declined.

The use of the term “ principality ” in regard to the Apostleship of Paul, and even with reference to the Episcopal dignity, in the third book of the work of St Chrysostom on the Priesthood, seems to you sufficient to explain away all these splendid testimonies. But where is it said that Paul had the principality of the Apostleship itself,—that he was the summit of the Apostles,—that he was set over the whole world ? No one, you say, as if on the authority of Chrysostom, “ was a greater favourite with the Lord than Paul ; ” that is, according to the force of the original terms, none was more acceptable ; his virtues were eminent, his labours immense, his sufferings extreme, his privileges great—but he had not heard from the lips of Jesus the divine words : “ Thou art a rock, and on this rock I will build my Church,—to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.”

As you have given but few quotations from this great luminary of the East, I may be allowed to submit some more specimens besides those already adduced. In his panegyric on the martyr Ignatius, who was bishop of Antioch, where Peter had for a time resided, he dwells on the great honour thus bestowed by God on that city : “ for he set over it Peter the doctor of the whole world, to whom he gave the keys of heaven, to whose will and power he entrusted all things.”\* Panegyrizing both the Apostles Peter and Paul, he thus carefully distinguishes the high prerogatives of Peter :—“ Peter the leader of the Apostles, Peter the commencement of the orthodox faith,—the great and illustrious priest of the Church,—the necessary counsellor of Christians, the depositary of supernal powers,—the Apostle honoured by the Lord. What shall we say of Peter ? the delightful spectacle of the Church,—the splendour of the entire world, the most chaste dove, the teacher of the Apostles, the ardent Apostle, fervent in spirit, angel and man, full of grace, the firm rock of faith, the mature

\* In S. M. Ignatium, p. 687, Tom. V.

wisdom of the Church, who, on account of his purity, heard, from the mouth of the Lord, himself styled blessed, and son of the dove : who received from the Lord himself the keys of the kingdom of heaven.—*Rejoice, O Peter, rock of faith!\** This is, indeed, the language of panegyric ; but it would have been utterly unwarrantable, if Peter were not in fact the necessary counsellor of Christians, the teacher of the Apostles, the rock of faith. It is not only when expressly engaged in panegyric that Chrysostom thus speaks of Peter. They are his favourite expressions, and every where occur in his writings : “Peter,” say he, “is the basis of the Church,—the fisherman who cast his net into the sea, and caught in it the whole world.†—He left his ship, and undertook the government of the Church ; he was called the key-bearer of the kingdom of heaven.‡—He was the *Coryphaeus* who occupied the first place, and to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven were entrusted.§”—He was “the pillar of the Church, the basis of faith, the head of the Apostolic choir.”||—“To him the Lord gave the presidency of the Church throughout the whole earth.”¶ To these splendid testimonies I shall only add the still more solemn evidence of facts. As Athanasius, the great champion of the Nicene faith, was driven from his See, Chrysostom also was unjustly condemned and violently driven from the See of Constantinople, by Theophilus, patriarch of Alexandria. In his distress he appealed to Innocent, Bishop of Rome, and invoked the exercise of his supreme authority. “I beseech you,” says he, “to direct, that what has been done wickedly against me, in my absence, and whilst I did not shrink from a trial, shall be void, and they who have thus acted be subjected to ecclesiastical punishment.”\*\* The

\* In. SS. Petrum et Paulum. Tom. V. p. 690.

† De Verbis Isaiae hom. 4, p. 609. Tom. I.

‡ In duodecim Apost. Tom. V. p. 691

§ In Ep. ad Corinth i. c. ix. hom. 21.

|| Hom. 2. de pæn. in Psalm L.

¶ Ad pop. Antioch. hom. 80, de pænitentia.

\*\* Chrys. Tom. V. p. 390.

Pontiff heard his prayer. "Innocent," says Palladius, "decreed that the sentence of Theophilus should be null and void."\* Why, may I ask you, did you not advert to this fact, and explain by what authority Innocent reversed the decree of the Alexandrine patriarch, and restored to his See the bishop of the imperial city? Could a more signal evidence be given of his spiritual supremacy?

\* Palladius in vita Chrys.

## LETTER XXIII.

ISIDORE, PROSPER AND VINCENT.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

In your thirtieth chapter you present us with the testimony of three Fathers, Isidore of Pelusium, in Egypt, a disciple of St Chrysostom, Prosper of Aquitaine in Gaul, and Vincent, a monk of Lerins, an island on the coast of Gaul, who all lived before the middle of the fifth century. Isidore observes, that Christ interrogated the Apostles, not through ignorance of the opinions of men in his regard, "but with a view to deliver to all a certain confession, which Peter, inspired by him, laid down as a basis and foundation, on which the Lord built his Church."\* This interpretation is by no means, as you conceive, "in direct hostility to our present argument," for when Peter is said to be the foundation on which the Church is built, he is not regarded merely as an individual man, but as an Apostle confessing the faith: hence, the confession of the divinity of Christ made by Peter, is easily identified with Peter making that confession. On him the Lord built his Church, not as on an individual man; but as a man divinely enlightened, and chosen to be the chief instrument in the divine work. The other passage presents no semblance of difficulty, for our Lord, as a good physician, according to the observation of Isidore, expelled the triple denial of which Peter had been guilty, by

\* S. Isidor. Pelus. de interp. div. Script. l. 1, Ep. 235. "Ut hac ratione certam omnibus confessionem traderet, quam ab eo inspiratus Petrus, tamquam basim ac fundamentum jecit, super quod Dominus Ecclesiam suam extruxit."

requiring of him a triple declaration of love, whilst he thus prepared him for the power which he was about to confer of feeding his lambs and sheep. Nothing, in the least degree adverse to the prerogatives of Peter, can be gathered from the works of Isidore, which, on the contrary, bear splendid testimony to the enduring character of the Church founded on the rock. “By the gates of hell,” says he, “the divine word designates the assemblies of impious men, and the blasphemies of heresies: all of which the Church of God resists, and breaks down, and overthrows, whilst she cannot be overcome by them.”\*

The first of the two passages you take from St Prosper, is found in his exposition of the one hundred and first Psalm:—“The sons of the servants of God,” saith he, “are the sons of the just,—the sons of the patriarchs, prophets, Apostles and martyrs; the sons, in fine, of the whole Church, which is the body of Christ, the mother of all the Fathers, and of all the sons.”† The citation of a passage like this is certainly not calculated to throw any light on the question under consideration, as it neither asserts nor denies the Primacy, and has not even an indirect bearing on it. The commencement of the other passage speaks of the Church as one man, Christ being the head: “The whole Church, with her head, which is Christ, is one man, whose proper office is through all time to bless God.”‡ In this, as well as in the former passage, the saint is explaining some verses of the Psalms in a mystical way. Christ is the supreme head of the Church, and Peter, or his successor, though styled the head of the visible Church, in relation to the other members, is only the chief member under Christ. No mention of this visible head is here made, because the exposition of the Psalm offered no occasion for it; but in many places of his works Prosper speaks of the authority of the Roman See as being the throne of Peter. In his letter to Rufinus, he says, that “the judgments of the eastern bishops, and the

\* Isidor. Pelus. 238. Sereno.

† Prosper Aquit. in Ps. ci. Ed. Par. 1711.

‡ Prosper in Ps. cii.

authority of the Apostolic See, and the vigilance of the African councils detected the artifices of the Pelagians.”\*—Speaking elsewhere of those who asserted that Augustine had not correctly defended the Catholic doctrine, he dwells “on the greatness of the injury which, in the person of this one doctor, they inflict on all, and especially on the Pontiffs of the Apostolic See.”† He repels the assertion as absurd: “According to your censure, the blessed Pope Innocent, most worthy of the See of Peter, erred. The two hundred and fourteen bishops erred, who in the letter which they prefixed to their decrees, thus addressed blessed Zosimus the prelate of the Apostolic See: ‘We have determined that the sentence passed against Pelagius and Celestine by the venerable Bishop, Innocent, from the See of the most blessed Apostle Peter, shall continue in force until they most unreservedly confess that we are aided in each act by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, not only to know, but to perform justice, so that without it we can have, think, say, or do nothing of true and holy piety.’ The holy See of Peter erred, which by the mouth of blessed Zosimus thus speaks to all the world: ‘We, nevertheless, through the inspiration of God—for all good is to be referred to its author and origin—have reported all to our brethren and fellow bishops.’”‡ He shows that these errors, having been once proscribed by Apostolic authority, should not be again discussed: “We are not again to enter into a new conflict with them (*the Pelagians*), nor are special contests to be begun as against unknown enemies: their engines were broken in pieces, they were prostrated in the companions and princes of their pride, when Innocent, of blessed memory, struck the heads of the impious error with the Apostolic sword . . . when Pope Zosimus, of blessed memory, added the strength of his sentence to the decrees of the African council.”§ “See,” he says in

\* Prosper ad Ruf. p. 164, App. ad Aug. Ed. Ven. Tom. X.

† *I. contra Collatorem*, p. 171.

‡ Prosper, *I. contra Collat.* p. 176.

§ Ib. p. 195.

another place, “the rebels everywhere laid prostrate by the thunderbolt of the Apostolic decision.”\* He calls Rome “the throne of Peter,”† “the throne of Apostolic power,”‡ the “head of the world,§ governing with religious empire nations which its arms had not subdued.” With these words of Prosper before you, how could you thus write: “On the subject of Peter’s authority over the other Apostles, or the derived supremacy of the Church of Rome, I find nothing in the works of Prosper?” Need I express my astonishment at this declaration?

In referring to the “Commonitorium” of Vincent of Lerins, you have studiously avoided citing those passages which bear directly on the subject, and confined yourself to a general principle, which is perfectly correct, but in the application of which you are peculiarly unfortunate. You should have turned to the eighth chapter, wherein you might have seen him illustrating his principle “by an instance taken from the Apostolic See, that all might see in meridian light—with what energy, with what zeal, with what determination the blessed successors of the blessed Apostles always maintained the integrity of the religion once received. Pope Stephen, of blessed memory, the Bishop of the Apostolic See, in conjunction, indeed, with his colleagues, yet in a more conspicuous manner than they, resisted innovation, judging it fit, as I think, that he SHOULD EXCEL ALL THE REST IN THE DEVOTEDNESS OF HIS FAITH, AS MUCH AS HE SURPASSED THEM IN THE AUTHORITY OF HIS STATION.”|| In the penultimate chapter, speaking of the letters of Julius, the Bishop of Rome, which were read in the General Council of Ephesus, he observes: “That not only THE HEAD OF THE WORLD, but

\* ————— stratosque rebelles

Oris Apostolici fulmine ubique vide.—*Prosp. in Obtrect. Aug.*

† Ergo Petri solium Roman, et Carthaginis altæ  
Concilium repeatant.—*Carm. de ingratis.*

‡ Juris Apostolici solio.—*Ib.*

§ Sedes Roma Petri, quæ pastoralis honoris,

Facta caput mundi, quidquid non possidet armis,  
Religione tenet.—*Ib.*

|| S. Vinc. Comm. c. viii. p. 26. Ed. Aug. Vindelic.

also its sides might give testimony for that judgment, the most blessed Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and martyr, was brought forward from the south, St Ambrose, bishop of Milan, from the north."\* In the last chapter he adduces "two authoritative declarations of the Apostolic See, one, namely, of the holy Pope Sixtus, which venerable man (he says) now adorns the Roman Church, the other of his predecessor of blessed memory, Pope Celestine.—Whoever opposes these Apostolic and Catholic deerees, must first insult the memory of St Celestine, who decreed that novelty should cease to assail antiquity, and must mock the deerees of St Sixtus, who judged that novelty should have no indulgence, because nothing should be added to antiquity."†

The maxims which you have cited from this admirable work are ours, and we alone can stand the test of their application. "If I," says he, "or any other, desire to detect the frauds of heretics, who are rising up around us, and to avoid their snares, and to continue sound and whole in sound faith, he ought to fortify his faith, by the help of God, in a twofold manner; first, by the authority of the divine law, and next by the tradition of the Catholic Church. But here, perhaps, some one may say: Since the canon of the Scriptures is perfect, and abundantly suffices to itself for all purposes, what need is there that the authority of the ecclesiastical interpretation should be added? Because, indeed, all men do not understand in one and the same sense the Scripture, in consequence of its sublimity; but each one interprets its words differently, so that as many opinions as there are men seem to be derived from it. Thus Novatian expounded the Scriptures in one way, Sabellius in another, Donatus in another; Arius, Eunomius, Macedonius, each in his own way; Photinus, Apollinaris, Priscillian, Jovinian, Pelagius, Celestius, each differently; and last of all, Nestorius. And, therefore, it is very necessary, on account of the many and various turnings of error, that the line of pro-

\* Comm. c. penult. p. 95.

† Ib. c. ult. p. 100.

phetic and Apostolic interpretation should be directed according to the standard of ecclesiastical and Catholic understanding.”\*<sup>1</sup>

Give me leave to point out to you the true application of this excellent rule. To avoid the prevailing errors, we cling to that interpretation of the Scriptures which has received the solemn sanction of the Church. The words of Christ to Peter appear to us so plain, that we are forced to conclude that no mind not already biased can mistake their meaning. One unenlightened by faith may disbelieve the power of Peter, because he doubts of the power of Christ to accomplish what he says: but whoever believes the divine power of our Saviour, cannot consistently call the prerogatives of Peter into question. They flow irresistibly from the words of Christ. Thus we fortify our faith in the first place by the Divine law, as Vincent of Lerins states. Next by the tradition of the Catholic Church. If the ingenious but tortuous interpretations of those who deny the Primacy† could shake these common sense conclusions, the

\* Comm. c. ii. p. 16.

† The following are some specimens from the most distinguished divines of the English establishment. Bishop Pearson says: “It will be necessary to take notice, that our Saviour, speaking of it (*the Church*), mentioneth it as that which then was not, but afterwards was to be; as when he spake unto the GREAT APOSTLE: ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church;’ but when he ascended into heaven, and the Holy Ghost came down, when Peter had converted three thousand souls, which were added to the hundred and twenty disciples, then was there a Church, (AND THAT BUILT UPON PETER, ACCORDING TO OUR SAVIOUR’S PROMISE) for after that we read: ‘The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.’”—*Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Article IX.* p. 506. Here the Catholic interpretation of the rock is distinctly admitted, but an attempt is made to explain the sublime promise of the mere reception of the first converts. It is easy by such a mode of interpretation to evade the plainest testimonies. “Our Lord,” says Potter, “received from God the keys of heaven; and by virtue of this grant, had power to remit sins on earth: the same keys, with the power which accompanied them, were first promised to Peter, as the foreman of the Apostolic college”—*Potter, Archb. Canterbury, on Church Government,* p. 60.—This qualifying phrase has no foundation in the sacred text.

authority of that interpretation which the Church **ALWAYS**, **EVERYWHERE**, and by the mouths of all, has delivered, would remove every possibility of doubt. After the review which I have made of your quotations, I can confidently appeal to the testimonies of all the Fathers whom you have brought forward, as well as to others, whom you have not noticed, some of whose testimonies will be found in the succeeding letter.

You ask, why did not Vincent of Lerins state, "that the only thing required to avoid heresy was to abide by the decisions of the Vicar of Christ?" His object was to show that Catholic faith is the simple enunciation of what has been believed from the beginning, and is still believed throughout the world, since the highest authority of the Church is only its guardian and expounder. He speaks distinctly of the zeal with which the ancient faith had always been maintained by the successors of Peter in the Apostolic chair: but he enters into no nice distinctions of what gives a doctrinal definition the character of a solemn expression of the faith of the Universal Church. However, all the monuments of Christian antiquity prove that those whose orthodoxy was called in question, felt bound to render an account of their faith to the Roman Bishop—that he was consulted from every part of the world on questions or controversies concerning faith—that his solemn judgments were directed to the Universal Church, and that even Ecumenical Councils listened to them with reverence.

## LETTER XXIV.

### GENERAL TESTIMONIES.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

HAVING followed you through the list of your authorities, and produced ample proofs of the full admission of the Primacy of Peter and his successors by the illustrious men whose testimony you have endeavoured to bring forward against the truth which they professed in word and work, I may now add a few out of many other witnesses of the ancient faith to whom you have not invited attention.

St James of Nisibis, one of the Nicene Fathers, says: "Simon, who was called the rock, on account of his faith, was justly styled rock."\*

St Epiphanius, bishop of Salamina in Cyprus, in the fourth century, calls Peter "the first of the Apostles, the solid rock on which the Church of God was built."†

St Gregory of Nyssa says: "The memory of Peter, who is the head of the Apostles, and together with him the other members of the Church, are glorified; but the Church of God is rendered solid in him: for he, according to the prerogative granted him by God, is the firm and most solid rock on which the Saviour built his Church."‡

St Asterius, bishop of Amasea in Pontus, in the fourth century, thus commented on the pastoral commission given to

\* S. Jac. Nis. Apud. Galland. Tom. V. p. 3, n. 13.

† Ἐδει τὸν πρωτον ἀποσόλων τὴν πέτραν τὴν σερὲν, ἐφ' ἣν η Εκκλησία τε θεος φύκοδόμηται."—S. Epiph. in Ancorato.

‡ S. Greg. Nyss. laudatio altera S. Steph. protom.

Peter: "When, therefore, our Saviour was about to sanctify mankind by subjecting himself, of his own choice, to death, he delivers to this man the Universal Church everywhere diffused, as a precious deposit, after having asked him thrice: 'dost thou love me?' and as with great alacrity he replied to the questions by an equal number of protestations, he received the world in charge, as one shepherd, one flock, having heard, 'feed my sheep:' and the Lord gave to those who should come to the faith, the most faithful disciple, almost in his own stead as a father, and lawgiver, and instructor."<sup>\*</sup>

St Optatus, of Mela in Africa, addressing the Donatists, wrote: "To err knowingly is a sin: the ignorant are sometimes pardoned. You cannot deny that you know the Episcopal chair in the city of Rome was first bestowed on Peter: that Peter, the head of all the Apostles, sat therein; in which one chair unity should be preserved by all—so that now, whoever would place another chair against this one, would be guilty of schism."<sup>†</sup>

To these writers of the fourth century I subjoin some of the succeeding age. St Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, commenting on the twelfth chapter of John, says: "He (*Christ*) was pleased to call him Peter, from the rock, by an apt similitude, as the one on whom he was about to found the Church."<sup>‡</sup>

St Peter Chrysologus, the celebrated bishop of Ravenna, wrote to Eutyches: "We exhort you, honourable brother, to attend with docility in all things to what shall be prescribed to

\* Ο μην σὺν σοὶ πάντες ἡμῖναν ἀγίστην τῷ αὐθιζότῳ θαύμα  
ώστερ τὴν παρθένην ιεζίστετο τὴν καθόλου καὶ σικουμεικήν ιεκτούσι,  
τούτα τῷ ἰεμβρὶ παρτίζεται, τρίτος ἀυτὸς τιμονίος το, εἰλικρ. με. Ως δο  
ταὶ ιεωθῆσθαι μητρὶ πρεθύμιαις ιεζίσισις τὸς ομολογίας πρινέτο, ἐλαφε  
τοι καρποὶ οἱ ιτιμένται ἀς μητρὶ ἀγέλην οἱς ποιμητ, ἀκινος. Βοσκετα  
αρια με. καὶ σχεδὸν ἀριτοῦ τοι πιστότετο μεβητην ὕδακεν ὁ κύριος  
τοῦ πεσσηλούτεος πετέρα, καὶ νεμία, καὶ παιδεύτη.—S. Asterius, Orat.  
in Petrum et Paulum, T. I. Auctarii Græc. Pat.

<sup>†</sup> S. Optatus Mil. I. ii. n. 2.

<sup>‡</sup> εἰπειρόμενος διὰ τὴν πίτηρα μετατρέψει πίτηρα εἰπειράτη γαρ  
ιμεῖστο την αὐτὴν βεμπίκην τεκτασίαν.—S. Cyril, Alex. I. ii. in c. xii. Joan.

you by the most blessed Pope of the Roman city, since BLESSED PETER, WHO IN HIS OWN SEE LIVES AND PRESIDES, grants the knowledge of the true faith to those that seek it.”\*

The solemn testimony of the bishops assembled from all Christendom may be added. The great Council of Ephesus, held in the year 431, affords us a most splendid evidence of the authority exercised by the Bishop of Rome, and admitted by the Universal Church, as the legitimate prerogative of his See. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, had sought to adulterate the faith, and Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, appeared as its strenuous defender. Celestine, Bishop of Rome, having been informed of the error, addressed Nestorius a letter of paternal remonstrance, and authoritative injunction, concluding with this sentence: “Know, then, manifestly, that this is our decree, that unless you preach concerning Christ our God what the Church of Rome, and of Alexandria, and the whole Catholic Church holds, as also the holy Church of the great city of Constantinople has held steadfastly until your time; and unless you, by an explicit confession in writing, condemn this perfidious novelty, which attempts to separate what the venerable Scripture unites, you are cast forth from the communion of the entire Catholic Church.” The Pope addressed Cyril, authorizing him to preside in his place in the synod, but charging him most strictly to execute the sentence of excommunication if, within the time specified, Nestorius should not retract. The Fathers proceeded to its execution, declaring themselves “constrained to do so by the canons and by the epistle of our most holy Father, and fellow minister Celestine, Bishop of the Church of Rome.”† The Pontifical legates having arrived after these proceedings, Juvenal, bishop of Jerusalem, at the opening of the third session, inquired of the legates whether they had read over the act of deposition. Philip, the priest, one of the legates, replied that they had, and that they felt sa-

\* S. Petrus Chrys. Ep. ad Eutycheten.

† P. 1462, Conc. Col. Hard. Tom. I.

tisfied that all had been done in strict accordance with the canons; yet he requested that the acts should be read anew in the council, in order that in compliance with the orders received from Celestine, they might confirm what had been decreed!\*\* The request was granted without difficulty: and the decrees having been read, the legate thus began the confirmatory sentence: “It is not doubted by any one, but rather it has been well known in all ages (*of the Church*), that the holy and most blessed Peter, the prince and head of the Apostles, the pillar of faith, and the foundation of the Catholic Church, received from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind, the keys of the kingdom: and to him was given power to bind and loose sins, who, down to the present time and forever, in his successors LIVES AND JUDGES. His successor, then, in regular order, the occupant of his place, our holy and most blessed Pope, the Bishop Celestine, has sent us to this holy synod to supply his presence.” He proceeds to state the obstinacy of Nestorius, who suffered the time prescribed by the Apostolic See to elapse without retracting his error: and then declares that the sentence passed against him by the consent of the bishops of the East and of the West is *firm*, and that he is cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church. The other two legates spoke to the same effect, after whom Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, proposed that the proceedings of both sessions should be presented to the legates for subscription. Arcadius, one of them, observed that the proceedings of the holy synod were such that they could not but confirm them. The synod observed, that as the legates had spoken in a manner becoming them, it now remained for them to fulfil their promise, and subscribe the acts, which they accordingly did. Thus in all things was seen, as Philip the legate observed, “for your

τας ίμεν ανολεθίσατε τῷ τύπῳ της αρισταῖς Πάπα Κελεσίν.

—δυνάμει της περιφύρα βεβαιώσα.

1 Ιξεχε.—Actione 3. Conc. Eph. p. 1476 and 1477. Tom. I. Hard Col.

blessedness," he said, addressing the Fathers, "is not ignorant that the *blessed Apostle Peter is the head of all faith, or even of the Apostles.*"\*

I know not what more solemn and splendid testimony could be given of the general belief of the divine institution of the Primacy. The bishops who composed this venerable assembly, were, with the exception of the Roman legates, oriental and African : yet they heard, without a murmur of contradiction, the strong assertions of the legates ;—they submitted their acts to them for confirmation—and they declared themselves constrained to execute the sentence of Celestine against Nestorius.

The great Council of Chalcedon, reporting their proceedings to Leo the Great, refer to his letter, which they had received with acclamations, and declare that "he is established the interpreter for all of the voice of Peter the Apostle." They say that he presided over them, *as the head over the members*, in the persons of those who occupied his place : and they speak with indignation and horror of the impiety of Dioscorus, the fallen patriarch of Alexandria, who, to his heresy, had added frantic violence against the successor of Peter.—"He has," say they, "extended his frenzy even against him to whom the care of the vineyard was intrusted by the Saviour, namely, against your Apostolic holiness."† In these expressions and acts of this venerable assembly, as well as of that of Ephesus, you have the clear recognition of the divine institution of the Primacy.

\* ἡ κεφαλὴ ὅλης τῆς πίστεως ἡ ἡ τῶν ἀποστόλων.—Act. 2. Col. 1472. Tom. II. Edit. H.

† T. II. p. 655. Col. Hard.

## LETTER XXV.

### INTERPOLATION OF THE FATHERS.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

YOUR chapter on the interpolation of the Fathers indicates some misgiving as to the result of their examination. You have indeed reason to despair of ever overthrowing the Primacy or any other Catholic tenet by their aid. From your enumeration some might be led to think that every passage in their works relating to this point had been brought forward, or at least, that all the witnesses, up to the middle of the fifth century, had been examined : but it must now be seen that most important passages, which dissipate any obscurity that might exist in others, have been left unnoticed, and several Fathers have not at all been presented for examination. I could have added many more, but I have reason to indulge the fear which you express, that this tedious investigation may prove wearisome to our readers.

You state your “conviction that the expurgations which our scholars have made of these ancient writings have left them still far from immaculate.” Do you mean to insinuate that no reliance can be placed on the integrity of any of those works ? The translator of Athanasius states, that many false and spurious books had been attributed to him : but have not the learned laboured successfully to separate these from his genuine works ? Are there not many works of this and other Fathers bearing evident marks of authenticity, which Protestant and Catholic critics unite in acknowledging ? The assertion of the Jansenist Quesnel may pass for what it is worth ; but what friend of lite-

rature, or truth, will consent, that, on such a vague suspicion, the splendid monuments of the genius, learning, and zeal of the early ages, should be all marked as uncertain? Let this literary skepticism be indulged, if you will, wherever there is a shadow of reason to support it: but let not these precious records be capriciously subjected to suspicion, merely because the partisan of error feels himself overwhelmed by their harmonious evidence. Whoever calls in question the authenticity of a work, should show the intrinsic characters which it presents of forgery, or at least the absence of external authority to warrant its being ascribed to its alleged author. The man who asserts that a work has been interpolated, should adduce reason to convince us that the passages which he questions are not consistent with the known sentiments of the author, elsewhere clearly expressed, or with facts which the author must have known, and would not have contradicted. Notwithstanding your oft-repeated professions of kindness and of courtesy, you conclude this chapter by asserting that our predecessors have confessedly interpolated the works of the Fathers to suit the doctrine of their day. Should I retort the charge, I might appear unkind, but certainly I would be supported by evidence greater than that which you can allege. Many of the works rejected by the learned as supposititious, inasmuch as they were once erroneously ascribed to authors who had not composed them, were not literary forgeries, but works written by men sound in faith, and which by mere mistake were attributed to others. Sometimes the identity of name caused the work to be ascribed to an author who had flourished in a different country and age: sometimes the want of any name led to the conjecture that the work belonged to some celebrated author who was known to have treated the subject. When vellum and parchment were scarce, the copying of a small work at the end of a large volume gave occasion to consider both as the production of the same author. Since the printing of books, most of these errors have been detected, by a critical examination of the works themselves, by the collection of manuscripts, and by reference to other works in which citations were made, or catalogues given.

Though there is still room for the exercise of just criticism to ascertain the correct reading of some passage, or the authenticity of some document, reasonable evidence of the want of authenticity must be demanded, unless we choose to plunge into the gulf of universal scepticism. Were we to act on your apparent principle, we might hesitate to admit the Bible itself, since it is undeniable that spurious books once were esteemed as divine, and interpolations or alterations of the Sacred Text—some of which may yet remain—were made by accident or fraud.

Was there no attempt by Catholic writers wilfully to pass under some illustrious name their own productions? There was, but from motives very different from those which you have attributed to them. Vigilius, bishop of Thapsis, in the fifth century, published some works under the name of Athanasius, because he wished to avoid the Arian persecution, which by writing in his own name he might have drawn upon him. Others, like Isidore Mercator, may have done in like manner for less worthy motives: but no Catholic thereby intended, or could have hoped to introduce a new dogma, or to give rise to a new practice. The forgeries proceeded from Judaising Christians in the first ages, and subsequently for the most part from the abettors of various heresies. An enlightened criticism will not regard all works as doubtful, because sometimes a romance is published, or a literary hoax proves successful. I will submit an instance of a supposititious work, which modern Catholic criticism has assigned to its real author, and from which it will be seen how little the supposititious character of a work detracts from its real worth, and how willing our writers are to assign every document to its proper author. Among the sermons formerly ascribed to St Ambrose, was one on the festival of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, which is now known to be the production of St Maximus, bishop of Turin, who flourished about the middle of the fifth century. The catalogue of his discourses was given by Gennadius of Marseilles, at the close of that century, and it served to discover them amidst the writings of St Ambrose and St Au-

gustin, with which they had been confounded. The error does not at all affect their authority, for though Ambrose flourished half a century before Maximus, and shed a brighter light on his own and succeeding ages, yet the name of Maximus is likewise held in veneration for the sanctity of his life, the integrity of his faith, and his sacred and sublime eloquence. The critical discovery adds another witness to the privileges of the prince of the Apostles, and presents another link of the chain of traditionary testimony. "Since," says he, "all the blessed Apostles obtain equal grace of holiness before God, I know not how Peter and Paul seem to excel the others by a certain peculiar degree of the virtue of faith in the Saviour: which, indeed, we can prove by the judgment of our Lord himself. For to Peter, as a good steward, he gave the key of the heavenly kingdom; on Paul, as a fit doctor, he imposed the duty of ecclesiastical instruction: so that whom the one instructs unto salvation, the other receives them to rest; and Peter opens the kingdom of heaven to the souls of those whose hearts Paul opened by his teaching. . . . Both of them, therefore, received keys from the Lord, the one the key of knowledge, THE OTHER THE KEY OF POWER: one dispenses the riches of immortality, the other bestows the treasures of knowledge: for there are treasures of knowledge, as it is written:—'In whom are all the treasures of knowledge hidden.' Therefore, blessed Peter and Paul shine forth among all the Apostles, and excel by a certain peculiar prerogative. But it is uncertain which is to be preferred to the other: for I think that they are equal in merits, since they are equal in suffering, and that they lived with similar devotedness of faith, as they attained together to the glory of martyrdom. For let us not imagine, that it happened without motive, that, on the same day, and in the same place, they suffered by the decree of the same tyrant. They suffered on the same day, that they might attain to the glory of Christ at the same time,—in the same place, that Rome should possess both,—under the same persecutor, that equal cruelty should be exercised towards both. The day, then, was

decreed in consequence of their merit—the place for their glory,—the persecutor for their virtue. And in what place did they suffer martyrdom? In the city of Rome, which obtains the sovereignty, and is the head of nations, namely, that where the head of superstition was, the HEAD OF SANCTITY MIGHT REPOSE: and where the princes of the Gentiles dwelt, the princes of the churches might reside.”\*

\* Serm. lxxv. p. 359. Vol. III. Edit. Bas. inter opera Ambrosii, S. Maximus Taurin.

## LETTER XXVI.

### CLAIMS OF THE PRIMITIVE ROMAN CHURCH.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

WITHOUT wishing to impugn the sincerity with which you express the confidence you have in the result of your examination, I must guard the reader against being influenced by your conviction, or misled by your professions.—“I conceive it proved,” you say, “by superabundant testimony, that the primitive Church of Rome professed to hold no authoritative supremacy over the other churches, and that she interpreted the language of Christ to Peter in precise accordance with the general voice of the Fathers, as conveying no official grant of supreme power or domination.” You may conceive all this; and it is perfectly true that Rome, neither in ancient or modern times, has claimed any domination in the odious sense of capricious and arbitrary authority. She professed herself at all times powerless against the truth, but powerful for the truth,—to level every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and to bring into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ. She acknowledged that the power which the Lord had given her, was for edification, not for destruction: yet she alleged and exercised that power, and she was sustained in her claims by the general voice of Christendom.\* As you have given few quotations from the writings

\* “Long before the earliest epoch that can be fixed for *modern history*, and, indeed, to speak fairly, almost as far back as ecclesiastical testimonies can carry us, the Bishops of Rome had been venerated as first in rank among the rulers of the Church.” This is the admission of Hallam, a learned living author, nowise disposed to favour Catholic

of the ancient Roman Pontiffs, which afford the most solemn evidence of what the primitive Church of Rome professed to hold, I submit to the reader some passages.

The authority which Victor exercised over the eastern churches has already been seen. St Cornelius, in his letter to St Cyprian, gives him the pleasing intelligence, that several who had been involved in the schism of Novatus had returned to the unity of the Church, and with deep compunction made the public avowal of their faith and submission. He gives the precise words in which it was made : “ We know that Cornelius was chosen by Almighty God, and by Christ our Lord, Bishop of the most holy Catholic Church. We confess our error. . . . For we are not ignorant that there is one God, and one Christ, the Lord whom we have confessed, one Holy Ghost, and that there should be one Bishop in the Catholic Church.”\* It is clear, that at this early period, the Bishop of Rome was styled “ Bishop of the Catholic Church,” and the one Bishop placed in it by Christ our Lord for its government. He had, indeed, numerous colleagues, but he was the one Bishop whose vigilance and authority extended over all.

Julius, whose proceedings in the case of Athanasius have been already noticed, had no less exalted an idea of the character which, as successor of Peter, he sustained in the Church of Jesus Christ.†

Pope Siricius, about the year 385, writing to Himerius of Tarragona, and prescribing certain rules to be observed, says : “ Henceforth, let all priests observe the foregoing rule, who do not wish to be separated from the solidity of the Apostolic rock, on which Christ built the universal Church.” . . . . “ We decree, by a general enactment, what must be followed hereafter, and what must be shunned by all the churches.”—He orders his decree to be communicated to the bishops of

tenets. See his *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages*. Ch. vii. p. 260. Ed. New York.

\* Cornelius ad Cyprianum. Coll. Conc. Labb . Tom. I. p. 831. Ed. Flor.

† Ep. ad Orient. supra. Lett. xiv. p. 184, et seq.

Carthage, Bœtia, Lusitania and Gallicia, that it may be inviolably observed, and all pretext of excuse be taken away, which he determines never to receive.”\*

St Innocent, who lived at the beginning of the fifth century, thus writes to Decentius, bishop of Eugubium:—“Who does not know, or perceive, that what was delivered to the Roman Church by the prince of the Apostles, Peter, and is still retained, must be observed by all?”† In his letter to the Councils of Africa, he speaks still more solemnly of the privileges of the Primacy, especially in causes of faith.

St Zosimus, addressing the Fathers of the Council of Carthage, observes: “The tradition of the Fathers has given so great authority to the Apostolic See, that no one would dare call its judgment into question. . . . So great power canonical antiquity, by universal consent, ascribed to this Apostle, from the very promise of Christ our Lord, that he should loose what was bound, and bind what was loose.”‡

I shall close this evidence with one out of many passages of Leo the Great. “Christ,” says he, “having assumed him (Peter) to a participation in his indivisible unity, was pleased that he should be styled what he himself was, saying: ‘Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church:’ that the building of the eternal temple by the wonderful gift of the grace of God should rest on the solidity of the rock, strengthening his Church by this firmness, so that neither human temerity could affect it, nor the gates of hell prevail against it. But, whosoever attempts to infringe on his power, indulges excessive and impious presumption, in seeking to violate the most sacred firmness of this rock, God, as we have said, being the builder.”§

You, yourself, suppose that the Bishops of Rome conceived

\* Syricius Himerio, Conc. Col. Hard. Tom. I. Col. 848.

† S. Innocent Decentio. Ib. Col. 995. See, also, his Letter to the African Prelates. Apud. Aug. Ep. 181. Col. 635. Tom. II.

‡ S. Zosimus, Ep. 12. *apud Constant*, Aurelio ac cæteris, &c.

§ S. Leo. Tom. II. Col. 1315. Edit. Ballerini.

the idea of establishing their supremacy at a very early day;\* how, then, you can consistently say, that the primitive Church of Rome, of which they were the organs, professed to hold no authoritative supremacy over the other churches, is to me inexplicable. You attribute their plan to human policy, though you admit their sincerity in thinking that the peace and prosperity of the Church would thereby be greatly promoted: but on what grounds do you ascribe to human policy, what they uniformly attribute to divine institution? and by what right do you attribute worldly wisdom to those whom their holy lives and glorious deaths prove to have been the chosen ones to whom the Father revealed the secrets of his kingdom?

You ask yourself a puzzling question: "how the doctrine of the Papal supremacy could have been admitted by the Church, if it were not founded upon the authority of the Redeemer?" Your answer is, that "the rank and influence of the Roman See, having given it a great and increasing preponderance in the councils of the Church, the canons of these councils by degrees confirmed its dignity. Thus, the right of receiving appeals was conferred upon it first by the Council of Sardica, some years subsequent to the Council of Nice. The acknowledgment, that it was the first of all the churches, was made still later by the Council of Constantinople."—Why did not you explain how it attained that rank and influence, when the very circumstance of the city being the seat of empire, exposed its Bishop to all the fury of persecution, when, consequently, he could borrow no lustre, and derive no influence from the throne.† It was "THE PRESIDING CHURCH," even when Ignat-

\* An instance of the exercise of supreme power occurred before the days of Victor, in the absolution of Cerdon from the excommunication inflicted by the Asiatic bishops—"Another, whom the Church of this age excommunicated for heresy, was Cerdon, who, coming to Rome when Hyginus was Bishop there, recanted his errors, and was restored to communion.—*Potter on Church Government*, p. 333.

† Valentinian III, in the year 455, in his constitution, called "Novel," makes mention of the dignity of the Roman city, but dwells especially on the authority of blessed Peter, as recognised by the canons of the

tius went to martyrdom,—it was, when Irenæus wrote, “the Church of more excellent, more powerful principality,”—it was for Cyprian, who lived nearly a century before the Council of Nice, “the princely chair.”\* You have stated, what you seem now to forget, that the sixth canon of that council was directed to guard against the encroachments of the Roman Bishop.† Were this the fact, it would be strange that, a few years afterwards, the Council of Sardica should have enlarged the privileges of the Roman See, by making it a high court of appeals from the sentence of councils, by which bishops were deposed. It is for you to reconcile these statements. At the same time you may explain how it happened, that long before the Councils of Sardica, or Nice, Basilides, a deposed bishop, of whom St Cyprian speaks, going to Rome, imposed on Pope Stephen, not acquainted with the facts, and obtained a decree that he should be restored to his bishopric. It may be also worth explanation, how, in the interval between the Councils of Nice and Sardica, the patriarch of Alexandria, for whose protection the Nicene canon is said by you to have been specially made, was accused to the Pontiff, anticipated the summons to appear before his tribunal, submitted to trial, or, rather, appealed to his justice, and had the sentence of deposition reversed by his high authority. At the same time, two other bishops, Paul and Marcellus, of Ancyra, appealed to the

Church: “Cum igitur sedis Apostolicæ primatum B. Petri meritum, qui est princeps sacerdotalis coronæ, et Romanæ dignitas civitatis, sacræ etiam synodi firmavit auctoritas.” “The merit of blessed Peter, who is the prince of the priestly order, and the dignity of the Roman city, the authority, also, of the holy synod, strengthened the Primacy of the Apostolic See.”—See Hallam, *Middle Ages*, c. 7, p. 270.

\* “At a much earlier period (*than that of Valentinian*), Irenæus rather vaguely, and Cyprian more positively, admit, or rather assert, the Primacy of the Church of Rome, which the latter seems even to have considered as a kind of centre of Catholic unity.”—Hallam, *ibidem*.

† Cabassutius understands it, on the contrary, as grounding the Alexandrine privileges on the implicit concession of the Roman Bishop, who knew and approved of them: “quia illud ei jus tribuere solet Romanus episcopus.”—*Notitia. Eccl.* p. 112.

Pontiff from the sentence of inferior tribunals, and Sozomen, the Greek historian, gives us in these words the result. “The Roman Bishop having taken cognizance of the cases of each of them, and finding them all to harmonize in the Nicene faith, admitted them to his communion. And since, on ACCOUNT OF THE DIGNITY OF HIS SEE, THE CARE OF ALL BELONGED TO HIM, he restored each one to his church.”\*

These facts are inexplicable in the hypothesis that the right of appeal was conferred by the Fathers of Sardica on the Holy See. A close inspection of the two canons that regard this matter, will convince you that the Fathers conceded no such right, though they fully recognised its existence. The first enactment which they made on this subject, was intended to correct an abuse, not to confer a privilege. Before this, a condemned bishop had the facility of obtaining a new trial from the bishops of the neighbouring province, without alleging satisfactory reasons. To prevent this, it was enacted that no new trial should be granted, unless by the special authority of the holy See, who should appoint the judges. This enactment abridged the power of the Metropolitans, who could no longer grant a new trial, which, before, was left to their discretion. With regard to appeals to the Pope, “from the judgment of those bishops who belonged to the neighbouring parts,” the council, at the suggestion of Gaudentius, decreed, that if a bishop “should proclaim that his cause should be heard in the city of Rome, another bishop should not, after his appeal, by any means, be ordained in the place of him who appears to be deposed, unless the cause be determined by the judgment of the Roman Bishop.” This enactment supposes the right of appeal, and does not create it; but it restrains the provincial

\* Οὐαδὲ τῆς πατρὸς κυριείας αὐτῷ προσκύνουσας διὰ τὴν αξίαν τοῦ  
Γραμματοῦ, εκάστῳ τῷ ἀδικῷ ικανοῖσσιν απίσταται.—Sozomen, l. iii. Hist. Eccl. c. 7. “The opinion of the Roman See's supremacy, seems to have prevailed very much in the fourth century. Fleury brings remarkable proof of this from the writings of Socrates, Sozomen, Ammianus, Marcellinus, and Optatus.”—Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ch. vii. p. 270.

bishops from proceeding to the ordination of a new bishop, even after a second trial, should the condemned bishop interpose an appeal for a final hearing in the Roman court. It determines this appeal to have the effect of suspending all provincial acts.\* The case of Athanasius, into whose See, whilst his cause was pending at Rome, Gregorius had been intruded, gave occasion to these canons. Had the right of appeal been conferred by that council, it would still be worthy of remark that it was with a view to honour the chair of Peter. The influence of the Roman Bishop, had it at all originated in the greatness of the imperial city, must have been on the wane ever since Constantine raised the new seat of empire at Byzantium. The prejudices of Constantius should have made him view, with peculiar jealousy, every new privilege of a See whose Bishop was the avowed and implacable enemy of Arianism, and had so lately sustained Athanasius against the Arian faction, which that emperor so much favoured. The Fathers of Sardica had been called together by the letters of this Arian emperor, at the instance of Constans, whose influence Julius employed for that purpose. Every thing, then, concurred to persuade them to diminish, rather than augment, the prerogatives of that See ; and nothing could have induced them to recognise its superiority, or admit its rights, but the deep-rooted conviction that they were the rich inheritance bequeathed by the prince of the Apostles to his successors.

With regard to the statements of Fleury, you may enjoy the benefit of them as far as they may be sustained by historical facts ; wherever these are wanting, we are free to dissent from his peculiar views, or reject his statements. But when you claim "his acknowledgment as conclusive, that a vast and deplorable change has passed over our primitive doctrine," you mistake doctrine for discipline, and you confound the extent of prerogative with essential rights. Fleury was of opinion that the false decretals served for the amplification of papal prerog-

\* See "Del Concilio di Sardica Dissertazione Polemico-Canonica, Roma, 1783."

gative, which, with other French divines, he was anxious to confine within the narrowest limits: but he and they loudly proclaimed the Catholic doctrine of the divine institution of the Primacy. It is foreign to my purpose to examine the correctness of these views, as I am only anxious to vindicate doctrine, without embarrassing the investigation by disputes about the extent of privilege; but I may be allowed to observe, with a modern Protestant writer, that, some years before the compilation of Isidore, "there was a genuine collection of canons, published by Adrian I., in 785, which contain nearly the same principles, and many of which are copied by Isidore, as well as Charlemagne, in his capitularies."\*

\* Hallam, *Middle Ages*, p. 273.

## LETTER XXVII.

### TEMPORAL POWER.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

HAVING vindicated the spiritual supremacy of the Holy See, by the divine authority of Scripture, and the testimonies of the venerable ancients, I should consider my task completed; but I regret to find that you have presented another topic for discussion, which is more likely to awaken prejudice, than to dispose for the investigation of truth. The temporal power of the Pope is, you would appear to believe, and are willing to persuade others, an article of Catholic faith, or, at least, was proposed as such for several ages by the Popes who successively occupied St Peter's chair. You even intimate that each Catholic is sworn to sustain the exercise of that power, should it be attempted, and you allege to this effect a portion of "the profession of faith," published by Pius IV.: "I acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolical Roman Church to be the mother and mistress of all churches, and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman bishop, the successor of St Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ." Though you are mistaken in supposing that this oath is taken by every Catholic, since it is almost exclusively confined to persons occupying some office or dignity in the Church, or to converts, on their admission to her communion, yet I freely admit that the obligation which it implies, is common to every member of the Catholic Church. It is manifestly no more than submission to the spiritual authority of the Pontiff, for obedience is promised him only as successor of the fisherman, and vicegerent

of Him whose kingdom is not of this world. The prelates and priests who have made that promise at the foot of the altar, have not hesitated, no more than the laity, to stand forward before the public tribunals, and, on their oaths, renounce allegiance to every foreign prince or potentate. You insist that "it is plainly impossible to know what true obedience means, unless we understand the extent to which the Pope has a just right to demand it." Notwithstanding the disputes of the schools, as to the extent of pontifical prerogative, we understand perfectly well what true obedience means, namely, submission to the legitimate exercise of pontifical authority, as generally recognised and admitted by the Catholic Church. It consequently implies submission to those decrees which are directed to maintain the general order of the Church, so wisely regulated by the canons, which have emanated from General Councils, or from the Holy See itself. We know that no obedience is due to any authority, in any thing immoral or wrong. In commanding us to honour our parents, God has not appended any limitation to the commandment; and yet, no one feels that it warrants obedience in any thing adverse to the Divine law.

With the disputes which once agitated the schools and the world, with regard to the rights of Popes over sovereigns, we have nothing to do: we live in a different state of society from that which gave rise to them. The Pontiff is no longer the recognised head of the commonwealth of Christendom, as he naturally, and almost insensibly became, when the nations of Europe, being all Catholic, looked up to him as the common Father of all, the highest interpreter of the relative duties and rights of all, and their most sacred and powerful protector. "The Pope," says Sir Edward Sandys, a Protestant, "was the common Father, adviser, and conductor of Christians, to reconcile their enmities, and decide their differences."\* Kings appealed to him to judge of the justice of their complaints against each other, before they summoned their subjects to the field of

\* Survey of Europe, p. 202.

battle to avenge their wrongs.\* Nations raised their voice to him, imploring him to admonish the sovereign who abused his power, lest suffering should goad them into revolt, and the horrors of anarchy succeed the more tolerable evils of oppression. Before Gregory VII. hurled the pontifical anathema against Henry, the Saxon subjects of this monarch had accused him, to Alexander, the predecessor of this Pontiff, as having committed flagrant injustice, in depriving Otho of Bavaria of his dukedom.† Impatient of his tyrannic sway, they afterwards broke out into open revolt, and the authority and mediation of Gregory were employed to induce submission, with a pledge that he would use his influence on the side of justice. It was only when the excesses of Henry defied all remedy, and were aggravated by a direct attack on the Pontiff himself, in an attempt to depose him, that Gregory ventured to declare that the ties which hitherto had bound his subjects to such a monarch, were snapped asunder.‡ The ground of this extraordinary act, alleged by a writer almost cotemporary, was the violation of a compact between freemen and their elective head. “Freemen,” said this writer, “put over them Henry as king, on condition that he should study to judge his constituents with justice, and govern them with royal solicitude : which compact he has constantly broken and slighted. Therefore, even without the judgment of the Apostolic See, the princes could justly refuse to acknowledge him any longer as king, since he disregarded the fulfilment of the compact, to which he had assented at his election, and which, being violated, he could no longer be king.”§

\* See Novalis, *Schriften*, Berlin, 1826, 1 Th., p. 191; also *Lettres sur l’Histoire*, Tom. II., Lett. 41, et Tom. III., Lett. 62; also in Mat. Paris, A. D. 1195, the appeal of Richard I. to Celestine III., against the duke of Austria, for having detained him prisoner at Trivallis. The Pope excommunicated the Duke for refusing to do justice.—Quoted by Milner, Letter 46, on Supremacy.

† See Baronii *Annales*, Tom. XI., an. 1072, p. 405.

‡ Ibidem, an. 1073, p. 479.

§ “*Liberi homines Henricum eo pacto sibi præposuerunt in regem, ut electores suos juste judicare, et regali providentia gubernare satage-*

There is, then, a closer affinity than at first appears, between the political principles of that age and those of the present day. The crown was held on the strength of a virtual, if not express compact, which necessarily supposed correlative obligations on the sovereign and the people.\* The Pontiff did not pretend that he could, at will, annul these obligations, but, on the contrary, he used all his influence to obtain their fulfilment; and when, after every effort had failed, he issued the sentence of deposition, he meant to dispense with no moral duty, but authoritatively to declare that, in consequence of the abuse of power, it had reverted to those by whom it had been committed to the sovereign, in trust for the public good.

The justness of this view of the principles on which Gregory and some of his successors acted, will appear from comparison between a modern absolution from the oath of allegiance with one of the thirteenth century. After the enumeration of the grievances which the American colonies had suffered from George III., the Declaration of Independence concludes: "We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority, of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that THEY ARE ABSOLVED FROM ALL ALLEGIANCE TO THE BRITISH CROWN; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved."—In like manner, the enumeration of oaths made to the Pontiff by Henry on his coronation, and on other occasions, and afterwards violat-

*ret, quod pactum ille postea prævaricari, et contemnere non cessavit, &c. Ergo, et absque sedis Apostolicæ judicio, principes cum pro rege merito refutare possent, cum pactum adimplere contempserit, quod iis pro electione sua promiserat; quo non adimpleto, nec rex esse poterat.*"—*Vita Gregorii VII.*, in *Muratori Script. Rer., Ital.*, T. III., p. 342.

\* Thus, in 889, Guido was elected king of Italy, to protect and govern with royal care. "Ad protegendum et regaliter gubernandum."—*Annali d'Italia, Maratori, Tom. XII.* p. 125.

ed, as also of violence, rapine, and other crimes, precedes the sentence pronounced by Innocent IV. in the first Council of Lateran :—“The aforesaid prince,” says Innocent, “having rendered himself so unworthy of the empire and kingdom, and of all honour and dignity, and being cast off by God on account of his iniquities, that he should not reign, or command ; and being bound fast by his own sins, and cast away, we show and denounce him as *deprived by the Lord* of all honour and dignity, and nevertheless, by our sentence we deprive him, and absolve for ever from their oath, all who are bound to him by the oath of allegiance.”\* In both cases, there is a solemn declaration, that the people are absolved from the oath of allegiance: grievances, excesses, and tyranny are alleged as the ground of either declaration. The American declaration is made by men who lay no claim to any divine authority in expounding moral obligation, but rest on facts of public notoriety, and principles of natural right: the Pontifical declaration emanates from one recognised as the authoritative guardian of faith and morals, and is grounded on facts equally notorious ;—on pledges solemnly given and violated, and on principles resulting from the very frame of society as it then existed. It was intended and calculated to give the sanction of religion to the assertion of natural right, and to quiet the conscience of the timorous, by showing that the public trust, having been flagrantly abused, the pledge of fealty given to the holder of it ceased to be obligatory, and the right of choosing a more faithful guardian of order, reverted to those whose privilege it was to choose him. The Pontiff accordingly added: “Let those, then, to whom the election of an emperor in the said empire belongs, freely choose his successor.”† I am not surprised, that those who have proclaimed the divine origin and absolute character of regal authority, should vehemently inveigh against these acts of the Pontiffs ; but I am astonished that the princi-

\* Conc. Lug. T. VII. Conc. Hard. p. 385.

† “Illi autem ad quos in eodem imperio Imperatoris spectat electio, eligant libere successorem.”—Innoc. IV. in sent. dep. Frederici Conc. Lug. I. T. VII. Conc. Hard. p. 386.

ples on which the Roman Pontiffs acted, should not be respected by those who regard royalty as a trust for the people, and the highest officer in every form of government as a public servant, who may be dragged from his elevation if he abuse his power,—principles entertained and acted on in the ages erroneously supposed to have been unillumined by a spark of liberty. Long before the first instance of Pontifical interference, forfeiture was deemed a consequence of the violation of the condition on which kings and emperors held their sceptres. This was the sentiment, and the feeling of those ages, and the Pontiffs, whom circumstances placed at the head of society thus constructed, gave expression to that sentiment, and the sanction of religion to that feeling. “The public opinion of Europe in the eleventh century,” says a modern writer, “was represented by a truly great man, Hildebrand, or, as he was called after his accession to the chair of St Peter, Gregory VII. In his own age, every one of these measures counteracted some evil principle, and helped to work out an antagonizing principle of civilization.”\* Another living writer, evidently adverse to the Popes, is forced to express his admiration of their influence in the middle ages. “That was, indeed, a splendid dominion which had been erected over the mind of man by the Gregories and Innocents! Its temporal were always subordinate to its spiritual ends. It was a *tyranny*, which repaid, by ample and substantial benefits, its demands upon the independence of mankind. It required tribute and homage, but it bestowed order, civilization, and, as far as was possible, in such fierce and warlike times, peace. It was a moral sway, not, like the temporal sovereignties of the time, one of brute force. It had comparatively nothing narrow or personal; IT UNITED CHRISTENDOM INTO A VAST FEDERAL REPUBLIC; it was constantly endeavouring to advance the borders of the Christian world—to reclaim the heathen barbarism of the north of Europe—or to repel the dangerous aggressions of Mohammedanism. The Papacy, during the dark ages, not-

\* Foreign Quarterly Review, for January, 1836.

withstanding its presumptuous and insulting domination over the authority of kings and the rights of nations, was a great instrument in the hand of Divine Providence, a counteracting principle to the wild and disorganizing barbarism which prevailed throughout Europe, a rallying point for the moral and intellectual energies of mankind, when they should commence the work of reconstructing society upon its modern system. In such lawless times, it was an elevating sight to behold an emperor of Germany, in the plenitude of his power, arrested in his attempts to crush the young freedom of Italian republics : a warlike, or a pusillanimous tyrant, a Philip Augustus of France, or a John of England, standing rebuked for their crimes and oppressions, at the voice of a feeble old man in a remote city, with scarcely a squadron of soldiers at his command, and with hardly an uncontested mile of territory.”\* Such is the tribute which the evidence of facts has extorted from men, by no means devoid of prejudice. It is time to do justice to the great and good men, who laboured strenuously and successfully for the good of society, as well as for the advancement of religion.

The maxim, that not to oppose error is to approve of it, cannot be applied to the acts of the Pontiffs, to give them a weight paramount to a doctrinal definition, for no abstract maxim opposed to faith was broached, but a power was exercised, which might be regarded as an accidental appendage of their office, arising from their relations to the actual social system ; or they might be considered as merely authoritatively declaring the cessation of obligations, on account of the violation of conditions on which they were originally made to depend. The prevalence of the opinion for some ages proves that it must have been sustained by something more than the mere example of Gregory VII. It must have had its root in the very nature of the relative obligations of the governors and the governed, according to the frame of society which then existed.† It must have been in accordance with the gene-

\* London Quarterly, for February, 1836.

† “ If,” says Southey, “ the papal power had not been adapted to the condition of Europe, it could not have existed.”—See Fletcher, p. 157, *Comparative View*.

ral feelings of right and justice, growing out of these social relations, and it cannot have been that capricious and wanton interference with public right, which some have imagined. But, common as the sentiment may have been, and deep as may have been the conviction of the Pontiffs that it was the prerogative of their station, either as heads of the social system, or as expounders of moral obligation, it never attained to the authority of a dogma, not even when Innocent III., to justify his interference in the quarrel between Philip Augustus and Richard of England, maintained, that “ though he could not judge of the right to a fief, yet it was his province to judge where sin is committed, and to prevent public scandals ;”—or, when the advisers of Boniface VIII. applied the same principle to regal acts in general, and contended that *ratione peccati*, as far as the sinfulness of acts of regal authority might come in question, the king was subject to the Pontiff.<sup>t</sup>

The third canon of Latran, which you object in connexion with this subject, is founded on the feudal system. The vassal vowed homage to his lord, the baron to his sovereign, and sovereigns themselves, in many cases, to the Pope,<sup>f</sup> the recognised head of the whole system. When banditti filled the Christian lands with desolation, pillaging or destroying the churches and monasteries, assailing the defenceless virgins of God, massacring the clergy, measures were adopted, in the absence of a well-constructed system of civil polity, to check

<sup>\*</sup> This is an instance of the successful interposition of the Pope to prevent war between Christian princes. Philip easily acquiesced : Richard yielded to the threat of ecclesiastical severity.—*Vita Innocentii III.* T. III. part i. p. 503.

<sup>t</sup> “ The sovereign Pontiffs,” says Count Le Maistre, “ never endeavoured to increase their temporal dominions to the prejudice of the lawful princes, or to molest them in the exercise of sovereignty, much less to usurp it. They never claimed but the right to judge princes subject to their spiritual authority, when these princes were guilty of certain crimes.”—*Du Pape*, Tom. II. ch. viii.

<sup>f</sup> The Emperor Lothaire III. consented to pay homage to Innocent II. for the lands of Countess Matilda, and made the oath of fealty.—*Muratori, Annali*, an. 1133.

these excesses. The councils of the Church were the occasion of the union of the emperor with kings and barons, as in general congress :\* and whilst the decision of revealed doctrines was left to the bishops, measures of a mixed character were adopted by the common council, or with the assent and concurrence of the civil authorities.† It was decreed, then, that in case any baron, or inferior lord, should foster the heretics whose excesses were enumerated,‡ he should forfeit his territory, the property of which had been given him by his liege lord on conditions incompatible with such favour. The declaration of forfeiture was reserved to the head of society, to the peace and welfare of which, the delinquent baron was regarded as a traitor.—All this, you perceive, has relation to times that are no more, and that never can return. It has no semblance of a definition of faith, but it is a mere legislative act, made in the assembly of the states general of Europe.

The zeal of the Council of Trent against duelling, led the Fathers to enact, that any prince holding a city as a fief from the Church, should forfeit it, were he to permit that detestable practice in his territory. You allege this as a proof of the temporal claim being sustained by the Fathers, because you cannot conceive that they could otherwise add a new condition to the tenure, and one so important, that a breach of it should

\* “ What a parliament is in England, a general synod was for Christendom ; and so necessary was the assistance and authority of the temporal powers conceived to be (since the capitularies of Charlemagne) to the making of such a synod, that without such legal strength it did not proceed.”—J. B. Clinch, in an anonymous Vindication of Dr Troy, p. 166.

† The incapacities and pains attached to the Manichean heresy, in the Lateran Council, are exactly the same as in the Justinian Code ; and they had the temporal authority, at least 650 years before they were stated in this council.”—Clinch, ib. p. 210.

‡ “ Who exercise such horrid cruelty upon Christians, as neither to regard churches, nor monasteries, nor to give quarter to widows, or to orphans, or old men, or boys, or any age or sex ; but who, like heathens, destroy and desolate all before them.”—III Lat. Can. ult.

work a forfeiture : but you must know, that the tenure of all fiefs was conditional, there being in every such tenure an implied condition, that the interests of the lord paramount should be sacredly guarded.\* The limitation placed by the council shewed the caution of the Fathers not to interfere with territories wherein no such feudal dependance existed. But why do you refer to an order of society which has passed away ? Christendom is no longer a republic united under one head : the spiritual authority of the Pontiff is discarded by the sovereigns, whose predecessors once knelt to do him homage ; the nations who formerly looked to his interposition as the best shield against oppression, now rely on other means of protection : the thunders of the Vatican, which at times shook thrones, and struck down tyrants, are no longer heard, except when faith is assailed, or the order of the Church is violated : and the Pontiffs are content, as in the earliest and brightest days of Christianity, to send the ministers of peace abroad to the world's extremity, preaching the everlasting Gospel. On what principle, then, can it be pretended, that a pledge of obedience to the Roman Bishop, as successor of Peter, and Vicar of Christ, implies any obligation inconsistent with the most perfect and undivided allegiance to the civil government under which we live ? Such a construction of our oath is not only against the natural and obvious meaning of the words, but their well known and universal acceptation : and you are too well acquainted with ethics and jurisprudence to suppose that any other construction is to be put upon an oath, than that in

\* "The essential principle of a fief, was a mutual contract of support and fidelity. Whatever obligations it laid upon the vassal of service to his lord, corresponding duties of protection were imposed by it on the lord towards his vassal."—Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ch. ii. p. 75, note.

Blackstone teaches, that every fief is subject to escheat, if the vassal commit an enormous crime : because "the tenant, by perpetrating the atrocious crime, showed that he was no longer to be trusted as a vassal, having forgotten his duty as a subject, and, therefore, forfeited his feud, which he held under the implied condition, that he should not be a traitor or a felon."—*Blackstone's Commentaries*, l. ii. n. 73.

which it is generally understood, and avowedly taken. It is, then, unfair and unkind to indulge the conjecture, that, by any possibility of construction, that oath could give rise to any obligation having relation to an order of society which for ages has had no existence. The reference which you make to the Council of Florence, in which we are taught, that to the Roman Pontiff "in the person of blessed Peter, full power was given, by our Lord Jesus Christ, of feeding, ruling, and governing the Universal Church,"—refutes your objection : for the plenitude of power is there clearly determined by the very terms to regard the feeding with sound doctrine, ruling with salutary laws, and governing with just administration the Church of God.—We care not what sentiment may have prevailed when that creed was set forth : it is sufficient, that it was not embodied in the formulary itself, that it cannot in any way determine its meaning. The fluctuating and jarring opinions which may from time to time prevail to a greater or less extent among schoolmen, are entirely distinct from the defined dogmas of Catholic faith. When the sainted Pius V. and the stern Sixtus Quintus hurled the Pontifical anathema against Elizabeth, whom an act of the English parliament had previously declared illegitimate, they did not define any point of doctrine : yet, though they relied on the fact of illegitimacy as a radical defect in her title to the crown, they did not obtain the acquiescence of the English Catholics on this delicate point of civil authority. Not even the iron rule of Elizabeth herself, which would have driven any other class of men to a general revolt, was for them a sufficient motive to hesitate in their allegiance. Since her day, no instance can be pointed out of any attempt of a similar character.

You suppose that the Pontiffs still cherish the pretension, and you strengthen your suspicion by the measures which were adopted to induce the clergy of France to recede from the position which they had taken in compliance with the wishes, and, as you say, through obsequiousness for the judgment of their royal master. Had they merely denied the deposing power, your inference might appear just; but you are aware,

that their famous declaration of 1682 contained three other articles of a very distinct character. It was sufficient, that any one of the articles was open to discussion, to warrant the Pontiff to treat with reserve a body that seemed to anticipate the decision of the Church by so solemn a declaration, in a matter regarding his authority. The bishops of France acted, then, as became prelates careful to preserve inviolate the unity of the Church, when they wrote to Innocent XII., that they had never intended to make a decree of faith by their declaration, and assured him of their profound submission to the rights of the Holy See.

The four opinions given by that profound jurist, Mr Butler, with regard to the extent of Pontifical prerogative, only show the liberty which we enjoy in all things where the defined doctrines of faith are left untouched. You "cannot comprehend the unchangeableness of a creed, the meaning of which its own best friends find it so hard to discover." There is no difficulty whatever, among Catholics, on the points which Mr Butler has accurately stated : "It is an article of Catholic faith, that the Pope has, by divine right, 1. A supremacy of rank ; 2. A supremacy of jurisdiction in the spiritual concerns of the Roman Catholic Church ; and 3. The principal authority in defining articles of faith." If you cannot comprehend the unchangeableness of a doctrine comprising these points clearly and distinctly, you have less perspicuity than your skilful attack on the Primacy would lead me to suppose. The disputes excited on certain exercises of prerogative, do not render questionable prerogatives loudly proclaimed by all. How many political controversies agitate the republic with regard to the precise extent of the power of the President, and yet the presidency itself is acknowledged by all, and its chief prerogatives are recognised with equal unanimity.

You express your opinion, that Mr Butler, who was so profoundly versed in legal science, must have smiled within himself, at the weakness of his argument, when he urged the oath established by the British parliament for the Roman Catholics, and the answers of five universities, and the opinion of the Gal-

lican and English divines, with others, as settling such a question." Though not a lawyer, I venture, on common sense principles, to say, that Mr Butler could, with propriety, urge these proofs as abundantly sufficient. A code of oppressive laws weighed down a devoted and faithful people, whose allegiance to the government, proved by their general conduct, was vexatiously questioned, on the ground that they cherished an opinion of Pontifical prerogative adverse to the supreme authority of the state. They disavowed it on their oaths. This, surely, in itself, was settling the question, for they were known to be so tenacious of the doctrines of religion, and so full of reverence for the sanctity of an oath, that they chose to suffer the loss of all their civil rights, rather than renounce the faith of their forefathers. Nothing more was necessary. Yet the minister of state consults foreign universities in France, Spain, and Flanders; countries distinguished for their devoted attachment to Catholicism and the Holy See—unless you please to except France, on account of some disputes about the extent of Pontifical prerogative and national privileges. All concur in disavowing the opinion, and yet you smile at the jurist who considers the question settled.—I submit the view taken of it by a clergyman of the Establishment, which fully coincides with that of Mr Butler:—"If it be asserted," writes the Rev. A. O'Callaghan, "that such are the claims of the Holy See, or the pretensions of the Roman Catholic Church, or the opinions of the Catholic laity of the present day—the imputation is equally FALSE, UNPRINCIPLED AND INSIDIOUS. It is refuted by the daily practice of every district in the Catholic world; by the acts of independent states, whether republican or monarchical; by the solemn declarations of universities, canonists, and professors of divinity; and by the oaths, either sworn or tendered, of the whole Catholic body. I do not envy the casuist, or divine, who circulates Bibles without note or comment, and resists such evidence as this. I do not envy, but I am astonished at him."\*

\* Observations on the State of Political and Religious Feeling in Ireland. By the Rev. A. O'Callaghan. London, 1827.

I waive, however, all advantage to be derived from the Gallican declaration, or from the answers of the Universities of Sorbonne, Louvaine, Douay, Alcalá and Salamanca, all disclaiming the temporal power, or from the oaths of the English and Irish Roman Catholics, abjuring it; and I stand on the broad ground of Catholic faith, and deny that we must be charged with principles that are not found in the authorized symbols of faith, or doctrinal definitions. You assert, that "from the days of Gregory VII. up to the time of Sixtus V., the claim of temporal, as well as spiritual supremacy, was constantly proposed by the Popes as an article of faith, acquiesced in, both tacitly and professedly, by the great body of the Church." I regret that you should have hazarded an assertion which you cannot sustain by fair and honourable argument. Why not refer to some definition or decree in which *this article of faith* was propounded? Such does not exist.\* The Pontiffs who entered into collision with sovereigns, issued no solemn definition of their right, or of its origin; but acted on principles which were acknowledged, and which were intimately connected with the established order of society. The solemn deposition of the Emperor Frederick, made by Innocent IV. in the presence of the bishops assembled in council at Lyons, could not, from that circumstance, derive the character of a definition, even should you insist that their presence was equivalent to approbation; because even a solemn act of the whole council is not a doctrinal decree, and does not necessarily establish a right or principle, though it may form a presumption in its favour. When the German empire is in question, it must be remembered that it rose into existence in

\* "The deposing power of Popes never was an article of faith, or a doctrine of the Church; nor was it ever proposed as such, by any council, or by the very Popes themselves who exercised it. At present it is not maintained even as an opinion by Roman Catholic theologians."—*Archbishop Troy, of Dublin, in his Supplement to the Pastoral Instruction of 1793*, p. 126.

† "Præsentē Concilio." In the sentence of deposition this style is observed. In the decrees, generally, we read: "Sacro approbante Concilio."

the person of Charlemagne, under the influence, and with the sanction, of the Pontiff. I care not to examine critically the degree of that influence, and the weight of that sanction : it is sufficient that the great Charles bowed to receive the crown from the Pontiff's hands, and that the name of emperor falling from the lips of the third Leo, was repeated with enthusiasm by the millions spread throughout the resuscitated empire.\* From that moment the Pontiff was looked up to as the guardian of the imperial crown : it was his prerogative to give it to the successful aspirant, who even journeyed to Rome to receive it. No one received the title, or exercised the authority of emperor, until crowned by the Pontiff :† and the gates of the Vatican were thrown open for the coronation only after he had pledged himself that he would sacredly maintain the privileges of the Church, as well as the rights of all classes of his subjects.‡ Is it then wonderful that the Pontiff was regarded as authorized to examine whether the pledges had been redeemed, and in case of their violation, to declare the forfeiture of power held by such a tenure ? Luden, a Protestant, has observed what is true in a sense still more comprehensive than he intended : "The imperial crown obtained its real importance through the Popes." "The Popes," he says subsequently, "acquired the full consciousness of the power, which, in those ages of vicissitude and tempest, the wants of men had accumulated upon their See."§ Of the exercise of that power Ancillon, no friend to the Popes, says : "In the middle ages, when there was no social order, it was the influence and power of the Popes that perhaps alone saved Europe from the state of barbarism. They formed a supreme tribunal, erected in the midst of universal anarchy ; and their decrees were, in general, as respectable as they were respected. It was their power that prevented and stayed the despotism of the emperors ; that replaced the want

\* *Muratori*, Annali, Tom. X. an. 800.

† Ibid. Tom. X. an. 876, p. 441. An. 879, p. 15. An. 880, p. 31. An. 901, p. 229. An. 1027, p. 23.

‡ Ibid. An. 916, p. 299. An. 1014, p. 395. An. 1109, p. 107.

§ *Geschichte des Teutschen Volkes*, von Heinrich Luden.

of equilibrium, and diminished the inconveniences of the feudal system.\*

You put it to our own good sense and candour to say, what the Pope himself would be likely to pronounce, if the question of his temporal power were submitted to him, and you give several reasons why he should put such a construction on the definition of Florence, as to assert his claim to temporal authority. Common sense forbids it: the propriety of words would be manifestly violated, and the false and forced construction would be glaring. It is not in this way that the Apostolic See expounds the definitions of councils, or sustains its privileges. There is not the most indirect reference to such a power in the Florentine decree; and the Fathers cannot be thought to have in any way sanctioned an opinion of which they took not the slightest notice.

I am sorry that such a vain hypothesis has led you to pen the concluding sentence: "And, therefore, I am compelled to conclude, that the oath to render true obedience to your supreme Pontiff, takes high precedence of every human obligation, as your system now stands; and that there is as yet no sufficient warrant for any other definition of Papal power, than that which has been inscribed upon the history of nations, *in characters of blood.*" What, sir, were your repeated professions of kindness to conduct us to this conclusion? Was it your intention, when you had laboured in vain to disturb our faith in the divine institution of the Primacy, to throw suspicion on our allegiance and devoted attachment to the government under which we live? Did you design to force on us a false interpretation of our creed, and thence to infer that you found no warrant for any other definition of the spiritual power which we

\* Ancillon, quoted by Fletcher, Comparative View, p. 157, American edition. "Feudalism was the worst foe to social order, because it was equally opposed to the sovereignty of the monarch, and the liberty of the people. Could it have held its position, Europe must have sunk into barbarism; but it had to oppose a powerful principle—the influence of the Church. In the eleventh century, the Papacy fought the battle of freedom and civilization."—*Foreign Quarterly, for January, 1836.*

reverence than one inscribed in characters of blood? You must read history anew if you have so far mistaken its bearings. You will find the Papal power exerted in the person of Clement to restore unity where it had been disturbed by the violence of faction, and from that period down to this, employed for the same purpose, so worthy of the representative on earth of the meek Saviour of men. You will find its history, for the first three ages, marked only with the blood of the martyred Pontiffs. You will see the ancient faith at all times strenuously defended by the Bishops of Rome, and every error, whether it proceed from a bishop of Constantinople, or a patriarch at Antioch, or Alexandria, authoritatively condemned. You will see the missionaries of Rome going to the world's extremities to announce the glad tidings of salvation, with the sacrifice of all life's pleasures, and at the peril of torments and death. If we appreciate the blessings of the Christian religion, we must acknowledge that to Rome, under heaven, all of us are originally indebted for them. And even that power which associated itself with the Primacy in the middle ages was eminently beneficent.\* History shows that it was interposed, generally, to correct vice, to shield the weak, to prevent civil war and anarchy. The legates of the Pontiff were angels of peace, entreating the rival monarchs to be reconciled:—pleading with the haughty sovereign in favour of an oppressed people. The blood that occasionally flowed in the contests that followed the exercise of Pontifical authority, would have been shed, in many instances, had no such interposition taken place: and if sometimes it has flowed at the bidding of the Pontiff, it was mostly when the helplessness of female virtue was to be defended against the aggression

\* Southey says "the Papacy was morally and intellectually the conservative power of Christendom. Politically, too, it was the saviour of Europe." Another modern writer says: "The Papal power was for ages the great bulwark of order amid the turbulence of the semi-civilized people of Europe."—*American Encyclopedia, Article, Gregory VII.*

of marauders, or the cause of justice and humanity was to be sustained. If, in the complicated relations of the Popes, and the general disorganization of society, excesses sometimes happened, over which humanity weeps, it should still be remembered that the power of the Church, in the main, "was a blessing which God bestowed upon the middle ages—where every thing would have been darkness, and bloodshed, and disorder—that alone guarded and perpetuated order, and justice, and light."\*

\* Foreign Quarterly, for April, 1836.—*History of the Franks.*

## LETTER XXVIII.

### MODE OF ELECTION.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR:

In your chapter on the mode of electing the Pope, and the ceremonies of his installation, you say: "That the bishop of Rome, as well as all other bishops, was elected, in primitive times, by the clergy of his own city and diocese, with the concurring suffrages of the people, is a fact so manifest, throughout the writings of the Fathers, that it cannot be, and never has been, questioned by any." Although the share which each class had, at different times, in these elections, may, I believe, be a fair matter of inquiry, I am unwilling to embarrass our discussion by entering into it at present. A similar feeling prompts me to pass over your assertion, "that after the establishment of Christianity in the Roman empire, the sovereigns exercised the right of confirming the election of the Pope, and that, after much contest upon the subject, it was left to the cardinals, in the eleventh century, to elect the Popes without any interference on the part of emperor, senate, or people, and such has been the course pursued from that period to the present day." Whatever inaccuracy may be in this general statement, does not demand any special correction at this time.

The measures now adopted to secure the tranquillity and freedom of the electors, and to preserve them from all bias, are mentioned by you, and your surprise at the adoption of such a system, "for the purpose of securing a result which is to be attributed to the divine direction," is, to me, a subject of astonishment. Surely, our reliance on God would assume the cha-

racter of presumption, were we to neglect the precautions which prudence prescribes for obtaining a happy result. Your own bishop Bull has well said : "The divine assistance and human industry always went together hand in hand, and an anathema is due to that doctrine that separates and divides them."\* Since, then, public elections were sometimes attended with disorder and tumult, through the intrigues and violence of the factious and ambitious, you should admire the retirement of the conclave, where all is conducted in the utmost tranquillity. The cardinals are the chief of the clergy of the Roman Church, having the titles and principal charge of the ancient churches of the city, with a few of the neighbouring bishops, who were wont to intervene in the election of the Bishop of Rome. They, consequently, exhibit the ancient form of election, though, with some modification, found necessary by the change of circumstances. Besides the precautions taken to prevent external influence, they daily invoke the Holy Ghost during the conclave, at a solemn mass, celebrated for that purpose, and they swear aloud, that their vote, which they place in the sacred chalice, on the holy altar, is according to their conscientious judgment: "I call to witness Christ the Lord, who is to judge me, that I choose the person who, before God, I judge ought to be elected."† However I may admire the simplicity of the primitive ages, I cannot but think that the mode of election now in use is better guarded against undue influence and other disorders. You style this mode the most extraordinary known in the history of man, but it is attended with nothing to give it this extraordinary character, save its sacred solemnity and inviolate liberty. The term election *by scrutiny*, which you use, might be mistaken by your readers for some mysterious mode, that gave this extraordinary character; and though it literally corresponds to the Latin term, you might translate it

\* Bishop Bull's Serm., "*Human Means Useful to Inspired Persons*," Vol. I., p. 262, Oxford edit., 1816.

† See Bull of Gregory XV., *Æterni Patris Filius*, an. 1621, Tom. III. Bullarii, p. 396, edit. Lugd., an. 1692.

“vote by ballot,” as it really means, which would not be very extraordinary to your readers. Two-thirds of the electors must concur in a choice; and when, on balloting, this is found not to be the case, a new balloting occurs, unless some *accede* to a candidate, and thereby give him the necessary majority. The tickets of *accession* are given in with the same caution as in balloting, to secure the electors from the influence of fear, or favour. No cardinal can, in any case, vote for himself, and his vote is never, through compliment, counted in his favour.

The ceremonies which follow the election, are indeed magnificent—indicative of profound veneration for him who, by the judgment of God, if I may borrow the language of Cyprian, is to occupy the chair of Peter. You surely cannot have any serious difficulty about the term *adoration*, used in the ceremonial, as it originally signifies respect or reverence, and is not at all intended here to signify divine homage. The genuflexions—kissing of the feet and hands—are ceremonies of oriental origin, used, in primitive times, to all bishops. The elevation of the newly elected Pope on the altar, is intended to express that he is to be the special representative and vicegerent of Christ. The tiara which is placed upon his head, is an ornament of great value, but designed to represent a far more precious crown, that awaits him, if he prove a faithful steward of his Divine Master. The epithet “Father of princes and of kings,” designates his high authority in the Church of God, in which princes and kings are undistinguished from the lowliest of their subjects; and he is styled “Ruler of the world,” in the same sense as Peter is said, by Chrysostom, to have been placed over the entire world. It may be, that the magnificence of this ceremonial ill accords with modern feeling and sentiment; but it is enough that its object is to impress our minds with veneration for the vicegerent of Christ, and that it has precedents in antiquity, and derives authority from the splendid ritual which God himself prescribed to the ancient priesthood. Why should we be fastidious about vesture, or marks of respect, if we revere in the Pontiff the authority of Jesus Christ,

the High Priest of the new covenant, whose ministry he exercises ?

In endeavouring to prove that the present mode of election is opposed to the Nicene canon, which, however, did not at all regard the Bishop of Rome, but the general provincial ordinations, you have fallen into several mistakes. You state that the cardinal electors "are bishops already, although only titular bishops, consecrated by the Pope, for some far distant country, without the least intention of ever beholding their nominal dioceses." Allow me to set you right. Of the cardinals, six only are cardinal bishops, and these of the neighbouring Sees of Ostia, Porto, Albano, Preneste, Sabine, and Frescati. Some belonging to the order of cardinal priests are bishops, having Sees in Italy, France, Spain, or other countries, where they reside, governing their dioceses, unless the Pontiff, for the general interests of the Church, calls them to assist in his councils. Of this class was the late Archbishop of Bourdeaux, whose memory is cherished with such veneration throughout this country, no less than in the See where he closed his Apostolic ministry. Fourteen are cardinal deacons; so that of the seventy who compose the council of the Pope, like the elders who aided Moses in the government of the people, only six belong to the order of cardinal bishops, and few, if any, are of the class which you have described. It is wisdom to be cautious in making assertions, and not easily to censure what, when well understood, might be found worthy of approbation. The present mode of electing the Pontiff is proved, by the experience of ages, to be the best calculated to secure the choice of a worthy successor to Peter, by leaving the electors free from secular influence, whether it be imperial or regal controul, or popular violence. It may be popular to extol ancient forms of election, when the right of suffrage was more extensive, but it would be fair to consider the tragic scenes which sometimes disgraced public elections, and which were the occasion of the abridgment of lay, or clerical privileges. Chrysostom observed, that Peter could himself have chosen a

successor to the fallen Apostle, without suffering any nomination to be made by others, and that, in granting leave to the faithful to propose candidates, he limited their choice to a certain class; a power which his successors used, in the regulations from time to time made for the proper management of Pontifical elections.

## LETTER XXIX.

### CONCLUSION.

RIGHT REVEREND SIR :

You wish to be permitted to hope, that the claims of Pontifical supremacy will soon be abandoned : it might be cruel to preclude hope, if it were not criminal to foster delusion. The organization of the Church, such as it was framed by its founder, must remain unchanged until the consummation of the world ; and the foundation must continue, whilst the edifice stands—the monument of his power and wisdom. Every plant that the Father hath not planted, will be rooted up ; every house, built on the sandy foundation of human wisdom, shall fall in ruins ; every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation : but that tree of life which the right hand of God hath planted, will bloom, in undecaying verdure and fruitfulness—against that house which is founded on a rock, the winds and waves dash in vain—against the kingdom governed by Peter, who received the keys from Christ—the gates of hell cannot prevail. Unity is its strength, and the See of Peter is the principle of that unity.

You claim to belong to the Holy Catholic Church, but your claim is necessarily vain, as long as you reject that unity which is her vital principle, and refuse to harmonize, in faith, with that Church “with which,” now, as in the days of Irenæus, “on account of her powerful principality, all must agree.” To be in the communion with the Catholic Church, you must, as Cyprian and Ambrose, Augustin and Optatus have taught us, be in the communion of the Bishop of Rome. In the symbol of the Apostles, you profess to “believe in the Holy Catholic

Church ;" but as long as you refuse to hear the voice of that Shepherd, to whose care Christ committed his lambs and sheep, you have no claim to be of his flock. The Arians repeated, without difficulty, the Apostolic symbol, and would have been well satisfied if no other test of their faith were exacted, than to believe "in Jesus Christ our Lord, the only Son of God the Father." You say that "you profess the faith held by the primitive Church ; taught by the early Fathers ; sanctioned by the first four General Councils." If you profess their faith in regard to the mysteries which they protected against the temerity of man, imitate, I pray you, their profound veneration for the successor of Peter. You have heard the enthusiastic acclamations of the Fathers of Ephesus, when the letter of Pope Celestine was read : "This is a just judgment—to Celestine, the guardian of the faith—to Celestine, who harmonizes with the synod—to Celestine, the whole synod returns thanks. There is one Celestine—one Cyril—the faith of the synod is one—the faith of the world is one."\* On the reading of the doctrinal letter of Leo, at Chalcedon, you have heard the Fathers exclaim : "This is the faith of the Fathers—this is the faith of the Apostles. All of us have this belief—the orthodox believe this. Anathema to him who does not believe this. PETER HAS SPOKEN BY LEO."† With what appearance of consistency can you claim communion with those venerable men, whilst you reject that authority under whose guidance they proceeded, in their most solemn acts ? What avails it to receive their definitions of the dogmas then controverted, if you listen not, as they did, to him who "is established the interpreter for all of the voice of Peter the Apostle?"‡ Would not the Fathers of Chalcedon, could they re-appear on earth, rebuke you for what, in their strong language, they would call "frenzy against him to whom the care of the vineyard was entrusted by the Saviour?"§

\* Act. II., Conc. Eph., Tom. I., Coll. Hard., Col. 1472.

† Conc. Chalc., Act. II., Tom. II., Coll. Hard., Col. 505.

‡ Synodical Letter of the Council of Chalcedon to Leo, Tom. II., p. 655, Coll. Harduin.

§ Ibid.

Leaving you to answer these questions, I proceed to reply to yours. "Why do you insist that Christians, who hold the same ancient creed, are not equally belonging to the Catholic Church, because they are alienated from each other on minor points of polity or doctrine?" Were one question to be answered by another, I would ask you why you would exclude a Unitarian from the Catholic Church, who would repeat the Apostolic creed in his own sense and meaning? But I reply, more directly, that we exclude none from the Catholic Church for mere difference on minor points of polity; but for dissent from revealed doctrines, solemnly defined by the highest doctrinal tribunal in the Church, or for the violation of unity. Our authority for this exclusiveness is no less than that of the divine Founder of the Church, who ordained that the refractory against her decree, even in a matter of much less importance, should be regarded as the heathen and the publican. When at the end of the profession of faith we declare that out of this Catholic faith none can be saved, we certainly do not include a belief in the deposing power; and you are sufficiently acquainted with our principles to know, that we do not, thereby, take upon us to anticipate the divine judgment, in regard to such as, through misfortune, rather than by their own fault, might be ignorant of some article expressed in that formulary.\* You know, also, in what terms Cyprian, Augustin, Optatus, and the Fathers generally, urge the necessity of unity; and how unreservedly they declare that martyrdom itself cannot avail, where unity is violated. You can, then, easily conceive why

\* Episcopalian divines are equally vehement in asserting the necessity of belonging to the Catholic Church, though they are liberal enough to embrace a strange amalgamation of sects, under this term. Bishop Beveridge, in his sermon on "Salvation in the Church only," says: "Seeing, therefore, that the Holy Ghost hath so positively affirmed that the Lord added to the Church such as should be saved, and likewise hath given us such extraordinary instances of it; it is no wonder that the Fathers so frequently assert that there is no salvation to be had out of Christ's Holy Catholic Church; but that whosoever would be a member of the Church triumphant in heaven, must first be a member of the Church here militant on earth."—P. 77, Vol. I.

we attach so much importance to obedience to its guardian. There is one faith, as there is one Lord ; and that faith regards all things, whatsoever Christ teaches by the Apostolic ministry, even to the consummation of the world. The images which you use to illustrate the nature of the Church, are not apposite when applied to dissentient sects : “ Does a body cease to be united to its head, because one member becomes torpid, and another deformed, and a third spasmotic ? Does a fold cease to be one, because the rams of the flock are accustomed to contend, instead of feeding side by side in peace ? Does a family cease to be one, because the nearest relations have quarrelled ? Does a crew cease to be one, because they refuse to eat together ? Does a nation cease to be one, because factions and party-spirit divide the people ? ”—I have learned from the Divine Scriptures, that obstinate error against faith, is the cancer that spreadeth,\* and the limb must be amputated.† The member that communicates not with the head, no longer appertains to the body. The child who has abjured parental authority, is not regarded as of his father’s household. Mutinous sailors, who will not acknowledge the captain, cannot be any longer regarded as the crew of the vessel. A portion of the people that refuses to recognise, in any way, the general government, ceases to belong to the nation. Suppose that any state of the Union should utterly discard the national institutions, and not only assert its own sovereignty and independence, but refuse to pay any regard to the enactments of congress, or the constitutional acts of the President ; could any man say that a state thus asserting and maintaining its absolute independence, would still continue to be one of the United States ? The bickerings of the schoolmen, national antipathies, the rivalries of individuals, and all the miseries of weak humanity, within the Church, do not cause separation ; but the moment a proscribed error in doctrine is publicly avowed, or the governing authority constituted by Christ is cast off, the individual gains independence at the cost of the sacrifice of

\* 2 Tim., II. 17.

† Gal. v. 12.

communion with the Holy Catholic Church. In pride and folly he has left the house of his Father, and cannot enjoy the privileges of a son, until he return humbled and submissive : "He cannot," says St Cyprian, "have God for his father, who has not the Church for his mother."\* Your cases are not in point. When Paul and Barnabas separated, neither of them disagreed in doctrine, or broke the bonds of Church communion, but merely differed in regard to the indulgence to be exercised towards one, whose former conduct seemed to demand severity. If Victor actually executed his threat to cut off the Asiatic churches from the communion of the Catholic Church, which may be questioned, they must have remained cut off, until the remonstrances of Irenæus and other prelates induced him to revoke the measure. Stephen never excommunicated Cyprian, but forbade any change in the ancient usage ; and though he thought that those who might persevere in the innovation should be separated from the communion of the Catholic Church, peace, however, prevailed in his heart, and in the hearts of the dissentient, that no evil of schism should arise between them.†

You ask, secondly : Why do we "aver, that the creed of the primitive Church Catholic warrants you in placing the supremacy of the Pope among the articles of faith?" Because the Apostolic creed speaks of only one "Holy Catholic Church," and that of Nice and Constantinople explains it as "one Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." The Church could not be one, without a principle or centre of unity, which is only found in the government of the one Pastor of the entire fold: it could not be Apostolic, unless the succession of its ministry were preserved uninterruptedly from the days of the Apostles; and this succession is only found in the See of Rome, and in the churches in communion with it.‡ Obedi-

\* S. Cyprian, *De Unit. Eccl.*, p. 164, edit. Basil.

† S. Aug. l. 5. *de Bapt. contra. Donal.* c. 25.

‡ "We do not deny that the Apostolical succession hath been continued in the Church of Rome."—Bishop Beveridge *Serm. I. Christ's Presence with his Ministers*, p. 24, Vol. I.

ence to the Bishop of Rome, as Bishop of the Catholic Church, was acknowledged as necessary in the days of Cornelius and of Cyprian ; and whatever forbearance was practised in regard to those, who, admitting the authority, remonstrated against some acts of its exercise, those who obstinately rejected the authority itself, were considered aliens from the Church, and from Christ. Thus, Cyprian argues from the words of Christ to Peter, that though the Apostles were equal to him in the honour and power of the Apostolate, “ Christ, by his authority, ordained the origin of the same unity, that the Church may be shown to be one—the commencement comes from unity, that the Church may be shown to be one.” Hence he speaks of Novatius as an alien from the Church, because not subject to the authority of Cornelius, its lawful Bishop, and his followers as persons separated from the Church ; and he treats all who are not under one Bishop, as aliens from her communion. His words are emphatically strong :—“ By the mystery of his (*seamless*) garment, Christ declared the unity of the Church Who, then, is so wicked and perfidious—who so maddened by the rage of discord, as to imagine, that the unity of God can be rent, or as to dare rend it—the garment of the Lord—the Church of Christ? He, himself, warns us in his Gospel, and teaches us, saying : ‘ There shall be one flock, and one Shepherd.’ And does any one think, that there can be in one place either many shepherds or several flocks ? . . . . What peace, therefore, do the enemies of the brethren promise themselves ? what sacrifices do the rivals of the priests believe that they celebrate ? When they are assembled, do they think that Christ is with them, who are gathered together out of the Church ? Even should such persons be slain for the name of Christ, that stain is not washed away by blood. The inexpiable and heinous crime of discord is not cleansed by suffering. He who is not in the Church, cannot be a martyr.”\* Take these words, and reconcile them with the theory which would make a Catholic and Episcopalian bishop in the one city,

\* S. Cyprian de Unit., p. 167 et 168.

with their separate flocks, portions of the Catholic Church ; and would present so many sects without any connecting link, without any common authority to bind them together, as composing the one fold of the one Shepherd. Jerome surely believed with us, that communion with the successor of Peter was essential, when he addressed Damasus, assuring him that he knew that the Church was founded on that rock—that whosoever is out of it, is like those out of the ark when the flood came—that it is profane to eat the mystic lamb out of this house—that whosoever doth not gather with him, scattereth, and that not to be with him, is to fall away from Christ, and to declare oneself a friend of Antichrist. Optatus believed the same, when he declared it schismatical and sinful to erect any Episcopal chair in opposition to that of Peter, and reproached the Donatists with calling themselves the Church, whilst they were in a state of separation from that See : “ Christ,” says he, “ indicates in the canticle of canticles, that his dove is one, that she is a chosen spouse, an enclosed garden, and a sealed fountain ; so that all heretics neither have the keys which Peter alone received, nor the ring with which the fountain is said to be sealed : and to none of them the garden belongs in which God plants the shrubs.” . . . . “ What,” he afterwards remarks, “ can you say to these things, you, who secretly cherish, and shamelessly defend schism, taking to yourselves the name of the Church ? ”\*

If you believe, that an oath of true obedience to the Pope is taken by every Catholic, you are in this, as in other matters, egregiously mistaken. Obedience is due to him by all, as the prelate placed over all ; but that obedience is given, when the faith is preserved, and the laws of the Church, and its order, are maintained. What individual Catholic receives from him a command ? Yet, to read your book, one would suppose that we are daily receiving from him, or expecting to receive, new mandates. The obligation of obedience, resulting from the divine institution of the Primacy, is strengthened by no special

\* Opt. Afri. l. 1. pp. 7. 17. Edit. Wirzburg.

pledge on the part of the infinite majority of Catholics. The pledge is scarcely given by any, except the clergy placed in offices of high responsibility, as it is meet that they should give a solemn engagement to fulfil the trust reposed in them. Converts, in some places, make it on their admission into the Church; because, having been previously estranged from this authority, it is deemed proper that they give a voucher of their sincerity.

You proceed to ask us: "Why do you, in the same creed of Pope Pius IV., retain the clause by which the professor of your faith most firmly admits and embraces Apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other constitutions and observances of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, when there are so many changes, variations, and innovations, brought in upon the primitive system?"—Because it is meet, that all the children of the Church should view with reverence her observances and institutions, whether they come down from the Apostolic age, or be of later introduction, resting on the legislative and governing authority of the successors of the Apostles. The terms regard disciplinary usages, rather than articles of faith, and are applicable to any modification of discipline which may be sanctioned by the Church. As to the points on which variation in discipline is asserted by you to have taken place, I think it unnecessary to enter into any discussion; for in all things merely disciplinary, the discretion of the governing power may be exercised: but when you begin by "*the kiss of charity*," which, however, is still preserved among the rites of solemn mass, ordination, and other functions, you remind me of the trivial causes of separation alleged by the Greeks against the Latins in the eleventh century, one of which was, that the Latins shaved their beards!

Fourthly, you ask: "Why do you retain another clause of the same creed: 'I also admit the Sacred Scriptures, according to the sense which the holy mother Church has held, and does hold, nor will I ever take or interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers,' when it is so manifest, that the Fathers do almost unanimously interpret

your favourite texts in plain opposition to your present system?" To us, at least, this is not quite so manifest, and, I should hope, that you yourself have serious misgivings as to the certainty of your inference from these words. The rule, however, is borrowed from St Vincent of Lerins.\*

Fifthly, "Why," you say, "do you (we) profess another clause of the same creed: 'I also profess, and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent,' when you know so well, that a volume might be filled with those passages from the canons and councils which retain no place in your present system?"—There is not a single dogma defined by a General Council, that is not professed by the Catholic world at this day. The doctrine of the Catholic Church, her solemn definitions, and authoritative expositions, are especially contemplated by that clause. None of the terms are strictly applicable to enactments: so that you cannot fill a line, much less a volume, with things delivered, defined, and declared, which are not in full vigour.

"Why," you again ask, "do we continue the clause that follows, in which the believer is bound to declare, that he condemns, rejects and anathematizes all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatever condemned and anathematized by the Church?"—The formulary is a close imitation of the seventh canon of the first Council of Constantinople, which is the second of the four councils whose faith you profess to hold. In that canon, the Fathers require that converts from heresy should anathematize several sects of heretics by name, and, in a general way, every heresy opposed to the teaching of the holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church of God.† You understand by anathema a solemn curse: we have already seen, that there are others who interpret it in the more gentle sense of separation from

\* Common. n. 3 et n. 28.

† αναθικτίζεται τοσοις ἀπόστολοι μη εργουσασι αἱ φρεσῆς ἡ γῆ τοις καθολικοῖς ἐπιστολικαῖς θεωρήσεις.—Can. vii. Conc. 1. Const. Col. 812. Tom. I.

the Church of God; but as the heresies are the object of the anathema, it may not appear so odious to anathematize them as it would be the persons who profess them. You are compelled to admit that the primitive Church was wont to use this formulary; but you assert that "she confined it to errors in the fundamental articles of faith."\* The canon just quoted proves that she was equally unsparing as the Council of Trent towards all heresies whatsoever: and all ecclesiastical history shows that the Church anathematized all errors against revealed truth, whether that truth was fundamental or otherwise. Thus the Novatians, whose error regarding the power of forgiveness, and the Quartodecimans observing Easter on the same day as the Jews and the Rebaptizers, fell under the anathema of the ancient Church. This formulary, borrowed from St Paul, was considered as sanctioned by the divine injunction —"If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican."† You need no longer be scandalized at the use of this expression in regard to heresies or heretics, for it has great precedents and high authority in its favour. You know that the acclamations of the Council of Trent were but the echo of all the ancient councils. If it pronounced many anathemas, it is only a melancholy evidence, that errors, opposed to the truth of God, were broached in great number. I shall leave you to interpret "anathema" as you please, and only observe that the Fathers of Trent affected no greater charity than that which animated the early Fathers, who, in like manner, proscribed every novelty that opposed the knowledge of God—and that which the Apostle of nations cherished, who himself would have wished to be an anathema from Christ for the sake and salvation of his erring brethren.

I almost sicken with disgust at perceiving men delicate in the choice of words, when the rejection or detestation of per-

\* Bishop Bull, of the Establishment, wrote against Episcopius, in vindication of the *anathema* pronounced at Nice against the Arians.—See his work entitled "Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, &c." Episcopius had called the Nicene anathema "harsh and uncharitable."

† Matt. xviii. 17.

nicious error is to be expressed, and reckless in advancing charges affecting the character and the rights of millions of their fellow beings. You say: "throughout the British dominions you are bound to curse, *as a heretic*, the monarch whom you obey as a king." You bring the matter to our doors: "True it is, that even in the United States, the same melancholy necessity pursues you." It does not become me to repel these assertions in the strong language which they provoke and so justly merit: but I must inform you that you are grievously mistaken. The early Christians prayed for the pagan emperors, even for those who persecuted them: and we sincerely pray for all those who are in high station, whether they oppress or protect us. The anathemas which the tribunals of the Church have pronounced against the professors of heresy, deprive them of the privileges of ecclesiastical communion, but do not change the social relations. We are known publicly and solemnly to pray for the president, for congress, for the governor and legislature, and for all our fellow-citizens; and we yield to none in the sincerity of our supplications for the prosperity of the national and state governments, and the happiness, temporal and eternal, of all—even of those who either openly traduce us, or who, with the honied accents of kindness on their lips, utter unworthy insinuations against our principles and conduct.

Lastly, you ask: "why do you cling to the phantom of infallibility?" You may call it a phantom, but Jesus Christ gives us the assurance that it is He who teaches through the Apostolic ministry: \* and his Apostle declares that the Church is "the pillar and the ground of truth."† The experience of eighteen centuries shows that his words have not failed, for not a single dogma has ever been solemnly defined which it has been found necessary to recall or abandon. The temporal power of the Pope haunts you as a phantom; and because it appeared in the middle ages, and disappeared when society had assumed a new form, you insist that the infallibility of our

\* Matt. xxviii. 5, ult.

† 1 Tim. iii. 15.

doctrinal tribunals has been forfeited. You will not consider whether the Pontiff acted as the highest interpreter of moral obligation, defining the limits of relative duties between subjects and sovereigns, when both appealed to his judgment—or whether his peculiar influence in the revival of the western empire gave him special rights over the occupant of the throne;—or whether the voluntary acts of sovereigns themselves gave him the authority of a lord paramount; or whether the very structure of society disposed men tacitly to concede, or recognise this power.\* None of these, or other considerations, though all grounded on facts of history, are admitted by you to account for the prevalence of the opinion favourable to the temporal claim: but you fancy it to be a dogma, though no Pontiff ever proposed it as such; and you reason thence against what you are pleased to call “the phantom of infallibility!”

You make a distinction, which, to me, is somewhat novel, between *failing* and *falling*. “The Saviour” you say “prayed for St Peter, that his faith should not fail: therefore, that faith was certainly infallible. But although the Apostle’s faith was not allowed to fail, it was assuredly allowed to fall, so that he denied his master!” When Christ disclosed to Peter the violent efforts which Satan was determined to make against all the Apostles, and gave him the assurance of having made a special prayer for him, he did not surely refer to the approaching temptation of that tragic night, for then he was to prove more frail than the others. He especially regarded the time in which he was to discharge the duties of his office, as head of the Church, by confirming his brethren in faith. How beautifully, how naturally, does the great Leo explain the Sacred Text! “The danger arising from the temptation of fear, was common to all the Apostles, and they likewise needed the

\* Although the empire was not a feud, the whole fabric of society was feudal, and the dependance of sovereigns on the Pope, as the representative of Him who is the source of power, was more easily conceived than the dependence of an inferior lord on the sovereign. The ideas of men were borrowed from the actual social relations, and every thing assumed a feudal character, just as the republican system prevails, and its forms are assumed here most naturally in all the relations of society.

aid of the Divine protection, since the devil was desirous of harassing them all, and of destroying them all ; and yet, special care of Peter is taken by the Lord, and supplication is made especially for the faith of Peter, as if the state of the others is likely to be more secure, if the mind of the prince be not overcome.”\* But, explain as you will this text, have you not heard Christ’s promise, that the gates of hell shall not prevail ? I am not disposed to borrow your phraseology, and term your nice distinction between *failing* and *falling* mere trifling ; but when I see you perpetually recurring to the opinion about the temporal power, I cannot but think that you feel the difficulty of combating, by direct argument, the certain prerogatives of the Primacy.

We have, at length, arrived at your conclusion. You advert to the plan of re-union, which was entertained, for a time, by Bossuet, Leibnitz, and some others, but which was soon abandoned ; and you express your reasons for believing that there is, at present, an approximation towards unity. I am surprised, however, to find you laying great stress on the part which governments should take in bringing about so desirable an object. Surely this observation is, at least, useless in this country, where the government cannot in any way interfere in matters of a purely religious nature, and is scarcely in harmony with the spirit of the age in which we live. “The efforts, however,” you add, addressing us, “necessary for such a purpose, rest chiefly with yourselves,” and the reason you give, is indeed extraordinary in the extreme. “As your claims now stand, it is a mistake to suppose that you can be satisfied with equal rights and privileges. You may think so in a country like the United States, so long as nothing better is attainable. You may think so in a country like Great Britain, where you have been deprived of those equal rights for centuries :” you might have added that we think so in France, and in Belgium, where we are emphatically *the nation*. But, by what right

\* S. Leo M. Serm. 3, in anniv. assumpt. sue.

do you make an assertion so prejudicial to our civil rights, and excite the jealousy and suspicion of our fellow citizens, belonging, as you do, to a church which, in the only country in which it can be said to have had existence, or, at least, influence and power, has “galled us,” as you admit, “with the yoke of Protestant ascendancy?” Do you not lay yourself open to the suspicion of sighing after the union of church and state, when, after having, throughout your work, laid much stress on the part which emperors took in convoking councils, at its close you distinctly state, that the great majority of the early councils **WERE ORDERED BY THE GOVERNMENT?** What would you say of us, were we to repeat your remark, that “a judicious employment of encouraging effort, on the part of those governments which have an established religion to maintain, would soon, under God, produce a settlement of all serious difficulty?”

You multiply assertions, which, to say the least, are groundless. Thus, addressing us, you say: “*You are bound in conscience, to contend for power, until your Church is what you think she ought to be, the acknowledged mistress of the world.* You are bound in conscience to be discontented until your rulers conform to your faith.” . . . You accuse us “of being compelled, by the very terms of our professed belief, to intrigue, to agitate, to proselyte, to strive and to persevere, until we have gained every inch of our ancient territory.” These are serious charges: they ought not to have been lightly or wantonly made. Permit me to say, sir, with all the emphasis which truth can warrant, or self-respect allow, that we have no power to contend for, save the triumph of truth, by the acceptance of the eternal Gospel of Him whose kingdom is not of this world. When He shall reign in the minds and hearts of all, from one extremity of the earth to the other, then shall his Church appear as a queen on his right hand in golden vesture, sparkling with every precious ornament. The virtues of her children—the humility of their faith—the purity of their love—their patience under oppression—their heroic re-

turn of kindness to their traducers—are the brightest jewels of her crown—and she covets no dominion—no ascendancy—save that of virtue over vice—of faith over unbelief—of the truth of God, and of his grace over the passions and pride of his rebellious creatures. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful through God to the destruction of fortifications, subverting of counsels, and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ.”\*—Our obligations are somewhat better understood by ourselves, than you have succeeded in explaining them. We are bound to respect our rulers, and to submit to every legitimate exercise of the established authorities,—to obey the laws,—to maintain the order of society—to love all men—and last, not least of all, to pray for them that persecute and calumniate us. There are persons who intrigue, who agitate, who proselytize, who are never weary in devising schemes for gathering money, and scattering tracts, and who send agents in every direction, avowedly to oppose the diffusion of our faith; and yet I would rather ascribe all this to that zeal which is not according to knowledge, than to any malignant spirit of anti-christian hate. You exhort us to examine over and over again the grounds of our system: but, it has been the study and guide of our youth—the meditation which occupied mature age, and gave us strength for virtuous exertion; and we have seen numbers expire in the settled conviction of its truth and divine origin. Every examination confirms the belief, that God is its author, and challenges the expression of our gratitude to Him, who strengthens the pupil of our eye to gaze on his glory, as here reflected through the mirror of revelation, for “he hath not done in like manner to every nation, nor hath he manifested his judgments to them.”†

You seem to have written for the government of England and for the congress of sovereigns, whom you urge to bring

\* 2 Cor. x. 4.

† Psalm cxlvii.





